

## **PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS FOR THE 2007 ANNUAL OPERATIONS PLAN**

The Oregon Department of Forestry conducted a formal 45 day public comment period for the 2007 Annual Operations Plans from February 15 through March 31, 2006.

The Annual Operations Plans represent a district level planning process which must be developed in accordance with the four Forest Management Plans (FMPs) and the seven district Implementation Plans (IPs) that provide the direction and objectives for management of State Forests on nine ODF districts. (The Elliott (Coos) and Sun Pass (Klamath-Lake) State Forests operate without IPs.) These district-level Annual Operations Plans (AOPs) describe the proposed on-the-ground operations, such as timber sales, road building, reforestation, stream enhancement projects and trail building, scheduled for the coming fiscal year that begins in July. The district forester approves the final plan for each district after any adjustments are made as a result of comments received during the public comment period.

The purpose of the Public Comment Period was to provide an opportunity for the public to review the AOPs, ask questions and offer comments. As a public agency, ODF operates in the best interest of Oregonians, conducting business in an open way with opportunities for scrutiny to foster and maintain public confidence that ODF operations are benefiting Oregonians.

Past experience has shown that public comments have the potential to improve plans, so the objective was not only to inform the public, but to receive feedback that would help to clarify the AOPs, improve their consistency with the long range FMPs and IPs, and to become aware of any new information that could affect a planned operation or improve its efficiency or effectiveness.

All comments received were evaluated using the following process:

1. Review each document to identify the individual statements.
2. Summarize each statement in a table.
3. Respond to the statement in the table. The response is a very brief synopsis of how the district intends to change the AOP based on the statement, or it provides an explanation of how the planned activity is consistent with the FMPs, IPs and other policy or regulation.
4. After the initial evaluation and response to the public comments, representatives from all state forest districts met to compare their evaluations and responses. The purpose of the comparison was to ensure consistency in the evaluation and response to statements between districts, and to seek out statements that should be applied to all district AOPs.
5. Revise district evaluations and responses to statements, then revise the district AOP based on the district responses.

The Annual Operations Plans fall in the fourth and lowest level of formal planning on state forests. They must be conducted in accordance with the parameters set forth in the districts' Implementation Plans, the Forest Management Plans and the 'Greatest Permanent Value' rule (listed from low to high level of planning). Administrative rules prevent districts from adopting recommendations inconsistent with the FMPs and IPs.

During the AOP public comment period, the Klamath-Lake District solicited comments through a targeted mailing to individuals who have expressed interest in the district state forests. In addition, the district continued to utilize the Klamath-Lake Forest Health Partnership as a focus group to review and comments on the AOP. The district received comments from four sources. As a result of the comments, three changes were made to the AOP. All three changes were made to clarify wording in the AOP.

Note: A complete listing of all public comments related to the district FY07 AOP can be referenced at our web site by clicking on [AOP Public Comments](http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/STATE_FORESTS/planning.shtml):  
[http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/STATE\\_FORESTS/planning.shtml](http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/STATE_FORESTS/planning.shtml)