The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) is establishing a statewide audit program to regularly measure landowner and operator compliance with natural resource protection rules in Oregon’s Forest Practices Act.

The 2011 Oregon Legislature directed the Private Forests Division to report on the compliance rate of Oregon forest landowners with the Forest Practices Act.

The compliance audit project creates opportunities in addition to reporting on regulatory compliance; the project will also serve the following roles:

- Identify training needs for landowners and operators regarding the Forest Practices Act, Oregon’s landmark resource protection law
- Ensure the Act is uniformly enforced and applied throughout Oregon
- Provide data and reports to support landowner forest certification programs
- Provide additional data to help shape ODF’s adaptive management process, and
- Ensure resource protection goals achieved through adequate implementation of the Act.

The major resource concern for this project is measuring delivery or potential delivery of sediment to streams in Oregon forests.

The 2012 compliance audit project is different from those performed in 1998 and 2002 as a contractor will collect objective measurements that will measure compliance with the Act.

ODF will release a Request for Proposal for professional contractor services for the project during fall/winter 2012 using the Oregon Procurement Information Network (ORPIN) process and website.

The project will focus on measuring compliance with the rules that govern forest road construction/maintenance and timber harvesting regulations. The audit will also examine selected rules related to planning forest operations, protecting water resources and harvest operations near streams and waterways.

What areas of the state will be included in the audit?

The contractor selected to perform the work will sample approximately 200 harvest units pre-selected by ODF, distributed across the entire state and reflecting a mix of private-sector industrial forest management, small-acreage or family forest ownership and other non-federal ownership. Sampling will be limited to timber harvest units where a Notification of Operation was provided to ODF within one to two years prior to the audit. Some selected units may not contain examples of all the FPA rules subject to the audit. Access to sampling sites will require landowner permission.
Will the contractor be enforcing FPA standards while in the woods?

A major principle for the project is the contractor will collect data but will not evaluate rule compliance. Evaluation of FPA standards is the specific statutory authority of ODF. The project contractor will report on specific site conditions and ODF staff will determine which rules apply in each instance.

What happens if potential violations of the FPA are found?

ODF places a high value on landowner education and voluntary compliance. In situations where the contractor finds situations that may be a violation, ODF staff will work with the landowner to address the potential resource damage. In situations where obvious damage is detected, the situation will be communicated to the local ODF district or unit office.

Where can I find out additional information about the audit project?

On the ODF web site, [www.oregon.gov/ODF](http://www.oregon.gov/ODF) or questions regarding the audit can be directed to:

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