

Forestry Program for Oregon

Oregon Board of Forestry

and

Oregon Department of Forestry

Strategic Planning Document

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES

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Shared Vision - developed at October 2022 retreat

Complex and resilient forest ecosystems that endure and adapt

Joint Mission - developed by FPFO subcommittee on 1/18

The joint Mission of the BOF and ODF is to promote and guide management of Oregon forests and fire to benefit all Oregonians.

Values - under development, will be informed by October 2022 Board / ET retreat discussions and community engagement efforts within this process.

Agency Purpose - developed by ODF Executive Team and reviewed by FPFO subcommittee

Engage communities, staff, and resources to sustain and adapt forests and landscapes for social, economic, and ecological benefits.

Agency Principles - developed and refined by ODF Executive Team as of 4/13/23

- *Understanding and honoring the complexity of the relationships Oregonians have with their natural resources and recognizing the value of diverse objectives across ownerships.*
- *Creating and maintaining a diverse, equitable and inclusive organization that houses a well-trained, service-focused workforce.*
- *Honoring our government-to-government relationships with the Sovereign Nations the state of Oregon shares land with.*
- *Building and maintaining diverse, inclusive, and trust-based relationships with Oregonians, partners, urban and rural communities, and local governments through **community engagement**, collaboration, communication, transparency and accountability.*
- *Using technology, best available science and recognized best practices to guide agency operations to build and enhance the **resiliency** of Oregon’s forests, reduce the impacts of climate change, minimize wildfire impacts and encourage biodiversity.*
- *Promoting economic development and diversification in the **forest** sector that promotes the adaptive capacity of forests.*
- *Recognizing and acting on place based approaches where appropriate.*

About the Board of Forestry (est. 1907):

-under development, ODF Public Affairs drafting

About the Department of Forestry (est. 1911):

-under development, ODF Public Affairs drafting

Climate-Smart Forestry in Oregon for a Resilient Future

- drafted by ODF technical staff

Climate-smart forestry is a holistic approach for addressing the management needs related to the existential pressures exerted from climate change. Recent impacts go beyond the biotic aspects of the forest and include social dimensions including economics and State financial

obligations. Abiotic and biotic forces are driving a divergence of existing ecosystems and the future environment.

The Oregon Department of Forestry and the Oregon Board of Forestry have accepted a definition of climate-smart forestry that includes three legs: adaptation, mitigation, and the social dimension (including communities and economic aspects). Building the Forestry Program for Oregon around this stool will help the Board and the Department be in line with each other on climate policy. It also helps to align the work the State is doing with its federal counterparts which have been directed to center climate-smart agriculture and forestry in their own work and processes.

So, what does a climate-smart forestry framework look like?

In previous iterations of the Forestry Program for Oregon, the Board has identified sustainable forest management as a key principle. Climate-smart forestry has been built out of sustainable agriculture and links with previous efforts to build criterion and indicators for sustainable forest management, like the Montreal Protocol.

Starting with **adaptation**. The changing environment has passed through tipping points that forests are unlikely to move back through. Forests see this through more extreme events, longer and more severe fire seasons, and a megadrought not seen since the dark ages (roughly 1200 years ago). These impacts do not spare any management approach or landowner. Adaptation policy can help forests adapt towards more resilient landscapes through human intervention. Changing forest structure, different management approaches, and incentivizing efforts to incorporate climate change into management decisions will be key. Additionally, providing tools that help forest landowners and managers assess their vulnerability to climate change can have broad benefits.

Next think of climate (or atmospheric carbon) **mitigation**. To reach internationally accepted targets (global temperature rise less than 1.5°C) to limit catastrophic impacts from climate change the global population will need to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere as well as work on adaptation measures. Natural climate solutions like forests, agricultural lands, and blue carbon all offer options to increase this mitigation through biologic sequestration. Forests, especially those on the west side of the state, are widely regarded as being highly capable ecosystems for this needed sequestration. Policy approaches and levers that can be utilized include incentivizing practices to increase stored carbon in the forests, reducing emissions from forest activities (e.g., limiting slash burning and increasing alternative slash use), among others.

Social license to achieve the other parts of CSF comes from the **social dimension**, a bifurcated part of CSF. Made up of communities and economies, this social aspect of CSF considers the impacts of adaptation and mitigation action on people, personal and community health, and community and rural economies. Utilizing climate smart forestry to create healthy, resilient forests that also provide ecosystem and economic benefits can help lift disadvantaged,

underserved, natural resource dependent, and those living with intergenerational poverty. This adaptive management will require a sea change from past management and there are opportunities for increased partnership with both public and private entities as well as community-based organizations and the people that they serve.

Climate-Smart Forestry will be used to stitch together the various aspects of this FPFO and will be present in each of the various goals that the Board and Department have mutually developed. More on this context, the structure of the goals and their assessment is on the following pages.

Terms and Definitions Key:

Goals are the high level policy areas of importance to the Board and Agency.

Each goal identifies partners ODF and the BOF need to achieve the goals, and the actions describe where ODF is assumed to lead the action, influence the action, or co-perform with action with others.

Strategies are the broad brushes that are used to successfully achieve a goal.

The strategies should reflect the Climate Smart Forestry lens to address climate adaptation, mitigation, and social dimensions of forestry.

Metrics gauge the measurable changes to specific goals and strategies. Metrics will be determined through:

- consideration of available data, resources, and ability to measure and track the metric;
- identifying those actions the board and department have the ability to alter or influence; and
- include the ability to look back in time as well as project into the future to ascertain if the Action and Strategy are meeting the intended targets.

Challenges identify barriers to achieving the goal. These can be social, economic or environmental.

Actions are the operational aspects of the FPFO and are largely identified by agency leadership working together with the Board.

Goals - goal headings developed / refined by FPFO Subcommittee, as of 4/19

NOTE FROM FPFO SUBCOMMITTEE (4/19 Subcommittee discussions)

- Adaptation, mitigation and social dimensions are different and important prongs that should show up as distinct strategies in all goals.
- Distinguish what the Agency and Board can directly lead on and what it can partner/influence others to do.

Functional and dynamic forest ecosystems (“resilient forests”):

Definition/Identification:

Goal: (Under construction) “Policy and management decisions support *forests to persist in a functional and dynamic state in the face of change*. Functional and dynamic forests are complex, biodiverse, and adaptable fire resilient ecosystems.

Context: Forests in a fragile state struggle to adapt during disturbances or stressors. Adaptation is needed. Significant environmental changes are occurring related to climate, society and economics, calling for a shift in the reciprocal relationship between humans with the natural environment.

Strategies: *to be developed and reflect Climate Smart Forestry pillars*

Spatial complexity

Fire resilience (see below 20 Year Landscape Resilience Strategy)

Biodiversity:

Water quality:

Social license: (see below 20 Year Landscape Strategy)

- ***Educated and engaged communities***
- ***Workforce capacity***
- ***Communication***

Metrics: *to be developed by the Agency after Strategies and Goals are determined*

Challenges:

Actions:

Partners, Partner Agencies and Constituents:

- Sovereign Tribes
- USDA Forest Service
- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Forest Collaboratives and related groups
- Forest Industry and related groups

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Climate Leadership:

Definition/Identification:

(Notes from FPFO subcommittee 4/19)

- ***What role do we play in climate leadership?***
- Opportunity to be visionary and bold.
- High level broad policies, directives and statements that help move the Agency and others forward.
- Areas for potential leadership include land management, regulatory, fire/mitigation.
- Engage with other Boards and Commissions on a more holistic vision.

Strategies: *to be developed and reflect the following three Climate Smart Forestry pillars*

From Climate Change and Carbon Plan (approved by the Board of Forestry on 11/3/2021)

Silviculture: Establish a just and equitable transition to climate-informed silviculture and climate-smart forestry that optimizes climate mitigation and adaptation, while maintaining a sustainable flow of wood products to ensure long-term resource benefits and viability of the forest products industry and flow of long-lived forest products.

Fire: Modernize Oregon's complete and coordinated wildfire protection system to respond to the increased severity of wildfire. Promote fire and smoke-adapted communities in the wildland urban interface and beyond, to mitigate the impacts of climate-induced increases in wildfire severity.

State forests management: Lead by example and demonstrate climate-smart forest management on State Forests to achieve adaptation, mitigation, and the achievement of forest resource goals

Restoration: Accelerate the pace, scale, and quality of climate appropriate forest restoration to increase the resilience to increased wildfire, drought, and biotic disturbance severity and incidence. Support implementation of the recommendations of the Governor's Council on Wildfire Response.

Urban forests: Increase the extent and resilience of urban and community forests to maximize the climate mitigation and health benefits of urban forest canopy.

Post-fire: Facilitate and encourage the reforestation of areas burned by wildfire and afforestation of low-productivity lands that are understocked or not in forest use.

Conservation: Support a strong, but flexible, Land Use Planning System as a cornerstone of maintaining Oregon's forests on private lands.

Research and monitoring: Maintain a research and monitoring program to track the status and trends of ecological, economic, and social indicators and the effects of climate change and to track progress related to this plan.

Metrics: *to be developed by the Agency after Strategies and Goals are determined*

Challenges:

Actions:

Partners, Partner Agencies and Constituents:

Resilient Communities (people-centric goals)

Goal: Forest policy development and management decisions should be viewed through the lens of fostering healthy relationships with human communities and supporting community resilience. Forests support resilient human communities to be able to respond and adapt to anticipated and unanticipated social, economic, and ecological change.

Context: Forests have both direct and indirect effects on quality of life, economic opportunities for communities, and ecologic conditions in rural, suburban, and urban areas across the state. Resilience varies regionally and between communities of place and culture. Forests provide a range of benefits to Oregonians and contribute to community resilience. Place-based and scientifically informed management approaches support forests to contribute a full range of benefits to enhance community resilience by meeting their needs.

DRAFT Strategies

Educated and engaged community on forest issues

- Support science-based education and discourse about forests in communities
- Help communities monitor changes in the forest and be prepared to adapt
- Engage communities, including but not limited to local communities, in forest planning and operations for all uses
- Placeholder for language on safe access (for recreation, culture, education, and appreciation)
- Placeholder for language on tribal engagement

Access

- *Promote access on all forestlands that is both inclusive and welcoming, for a wide range of needs that are important to all Oregonians.*
- *ODF will work with partners to incentivize access across forest ownership types in a manner that respects private ownership, recognizes landowner objectives, and avoids natural resource damage.*

Economic viability/vitality

- Next generation - invest in high school and community college programs that
- focus on forestry
- Embrace new technology and pilot projects for non-traditional forest products
- Create jobs in forest management, focused on climate mitigation and adaptation
- Develop scalable and adaptable infrastructure of the forest sector economy
- Work with the legislature to ensure ODF's economic health
- Work with communities to develop diversified revenue streams that allow
- communities to be adaptable

Public health:

- Access to healthy forests for recreation, culture, education, and appreciation
- Clean water and air

Policy/regulatory certainty

- Policy should be based on peer-reviewed social science and biophysical science policy as well as traditional ecological knowledge
- Avoid divisive language and approaches. Find common ground that brings people from diverse communities together toward common goals.

Management across ownerships

- Forests are managed collaboratively across ownerships, promoting diverse management strategies that maintain environmental and economic values
- Where appropriate, encourage federal forest restoration without compromising environmental values
- Placeholder for Tribal co-management
- *Private Forest Accord implementation - guidance for ODF's role on private forests, including monitoring/ reporting, HCP development, rules enforcement, technical assistance, grant administration, develop a stream classification system*
- *Placeholder: 20 Year Strategy*

Wildfire resiliency

- Involving advancement of building codes, defensible space, strategic fuel reduction, and prescribed burning.
- 20-Year Landscape Resiliency Plan

Place-Based Strategies

- Integrate climate-smart tree establishment and management into county planning across the spectrum of local cultures and community values

Diversity of Human Communities (*placeholder language needs review*)

- *A wide variety of factors overlap to affect Oregonians' values and interests related to forests and natural resources. Some of those factors include age, race, ethnicity, country of origin, gender identity, personal and family experiences, sexual orientation, occupation or vocation, geographic location, community or Tribal culture, physical abilities, and individual beliefs.*
- *To nurture and sustain healthy and productive communities, we must consider the needs and interests of every community member, particularly those whose needs and interests have been overlooked, disregarded, or left out in the past. This requires us to build relationships with, engage with, and listen to everyone in our communities, with particular attention to those who are most vulnerable or have been excluded from public decision making.*

Metrics: *to be developed by the Agency after Strategies and Goals are determined*

Challenges:

Actions:

Partners, Partner Agencies and Constituents:

Organizational Excellence: *drafted by ODF Executive Team, as of 4/13/23*

Definition/Identification

Oregon state agencies have an obligation to the Oregonians they serve to continually improve business processes to promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness in their delivery of services. This includes being transparent, accountable and fiscally responsible. In order to achieve this, ODF's operations must be integrated and aligned through shared common policies, goals and objectives that support direction provided by the Board, Executive Branch and Legislature. Engaging with partners, urban and rural communities, local governments and Sovereign Nations is essential. Operational excellence requires a well-trained, highly competent and diverse staff of professionals.

Strategies:

1. Create and maintain strategic and operational plans that support accomplishment of FPFO goals.
2. Collaboratively develop strategic and operational plans.
3. Work with other state and federal agencies to leverage efficiencies and opportunities to accomplish individual and shared goals and objectives.
4. Increase transparency into agency operations and performance through clear, accurate and easily accessible reporting.
5. Continue to build a strong and diverse agency workforce.
6. Establish and maintain visible regulatory programs with consistent enforcement of laws and rules.

Metrics:

1. Board, ODF staff, external agencies, stakeholders and public indicate that common themes of FPFO are clearly visible and understood in other agency plans.
2. Clear reporting of engagement process for plans from standing advisory committees and workgroups created for specific planning efforts.
3. Monitoring plans that clearly articulate the efficient use of ODF and external resources.
4. Usage statistics for dashboards and number of information requests received that are answered by existing dashboards.
5. Reporting on recruitment venues used and diversity statistics on candidate pools and resulting hires.
6. Number of agreements with colleges and universities, numbers of interns and diversity statistics on interns.

Challenges:

- Current unfunded positions in the Planning Branch to help coordinate plan development across the agency.
- Lack of consistent process for engagement of tribes, partners, stakeholders and public in planning processes. Some standing committees not being leveraged to their full potential.
- Monitoring positions and processes that are contained within different divisions.
- Lack of existing dashboards and integration of supporting information systems across agency.
- (Need HR help on challenges for recruiting)
- Lack of existing intern program and cost of sustaining program.

Actions:

- Transparency: Create and maintain dashboards for key metrics that are publicly available on ODF's external website. Provide internal and external access to areas of

interest like status of enforcement actions, budget setting process, and public records requests.

- Workforce: Continue to incorporate DEI tools into ODF hiring practices and expand advertising of recruiting positions to broaden employee diversity.
- Workforce: Reinstitute and expand intern program.

Partners, Partner Agencies and Constituents:

- DAS
- Sibling state agencies
- Universities and community colleges
- [Federal land managers](#)

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