

Work Plan: ODF Fire Protection

Version: 2022-2024 Final

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DIVISION OVERVIEW

Purpose & Objective

The authorizing statute for the Protection Division is ORS 477.005 stating, “The preservation of the forests and the conservation of the forest resources through the prevention and suppression of forest fires hereby are declared to be the public policy of the State of Oregon.” The program’s mission is to protect Oregon forestlands from fire, through a complete and coordinated system with our cooperators, including fire prevention, suppression, investigation, and cost collection. The overarching programmatic goal is to minimize acres burned, the cost of suppression, and the loss to resources through aggressive wildland fire initial attack, secondary only to the protection of human life.

Current Issues and Focus

There are several policy issues affecting the Protection Division that warrants the Board’s attention over the next several years. Maintaining a complete and coordinated protection system requires periodic program review and revisions of policy ensuring a dynamic and sustainable program that encourages participation by stakeholders and cooperators. These reviews have culminated in the Governor’s Council on Wildfire Response recommendations and ultimately in the passage of Senate Bill 762, which advances fire protection in Oregon.

This plan outlines ongoing wildfire leadership and policy work of the Board, including the implementation of SB 762 which requires Board action through 2024. The full requirements of Senate Bill 762 can be found in the SB 762 workplan.

DIVISION TOPICS FOR THE BOARD OF FORESTRY 2022-2024

Annual & Ongoing Topics: Intermittently presented to the Board

Overview / Purpose

Approve Protection Budgets: As directed by statute, at the June Board of Forestry meeting, “The State Board of Forestry shall annually review the forest protection district and rangeland protection budgets, make any changes in the budgets that are proper and consistent with law, and pass final approval on all protection budgets and the prorated acreage rates therein.”

Forest Protective Association (FPA) Letters: In each of the agreements with the non-operating forest protective associations, there is an opportunity for communication directly to the board from each protective association “...an annual letter from the Association to the Forester providing input on Department operations affecting the District or the Association (to be transmitted to all members of the Board) ...” (State Forester letters). This can be delivered as a consent agenda item.

Fire Season Reports: Protection staff will provide fire season reports monthly, during the fire season.

Smoke Management Annual Report: Since the latest significant revision to the smoke management rules in 2018, Protection staff has been providing an update on prescribed burning on forestland across Oregon. This can be delivered as a consent agenda item.

Forest Protection Association Agreements: Periodically, agreements are updated, and Board approval of updated agreements are necessary under OAR 629-041-0100. This can be delivered as a consent agenda item.

Rangeland Protection Association formation: Periodically, a request for a public hearing on the possible formation of a Rangeland Protection Association (RPA) will come before the Board for approval. Based on the outcome of the hearing, the Board may receive a request for approval on the formation of an RPA. This can be delivered as a consent agenda item.

Forest Patrol Assessment: Periodically, property owners of forestland that is newly classified by a county Forestland Classification committee, request to appear before the Board for an appeal of the addition of property to the forest patrol assessment. The forestland classification process may also prompt review of the administrative boundaries of the Department’s forest protection districts.

Board Deliverables with Timelines

At each June Board meeting, the budgets for the forest protection districts and rangeland protection associations, and copies of the FPA letters will be presented to the Board for consideration as directed in statute and the association agreements. Fire season reports will be presented to the Board monthly from June through November and as requested. All other ongoing topics will be presented to the Board on an as-needed basis, often in a consent agenda format.

Outreach and Public Involvement

- Prior to the June Board meeting, the forest protection district budgets are developed through local budget committees made up of landowners, reviewed and discussed at the forest protective association meetings, and required to go through a public hearing at district and unit offices.
- Public comments may be accepted on all annual and ongoing topics at Board meetings.
- FLCC/Forest Patrol.... Forestland classification, the county led precursor to the application of the forest patrol assessment, is conducted following the outreach process outlined in OAR 629-045-0045.

New Opportunities This Biennium: SB 762 Implementation, 2021-2023 Budget Implementation, Prevention Program Advancements and Bureau of Land Management – West Oregon Operating Plan Updates

Topic: SB 762 Implementation and 2021-2023 Budget Implementation

SB 762 Implementation is a priority for the Protection Division and all the elements within SB 762 are covered under a Board Work Plan unique to that effort.

Topic: Prevention Program Advancements

Overview/Purpose

The Department intends to initiate a comprehensive prevention program review, with an intent to advance prevention programs to mitigate the catastrophic risk of wildfire. Given that over 2/3 of fires starting on ODF protected lands are human-caused, the Division expects a prevention program review to result in recommendations for OAR and ORS changes, to be considered through the Board.

Board Deliverables with Timelines

The Division intends to complete the following program review to inform decisions on any ORS or OAR revisions from the Board:

- Prevention Program Review – **June 2023**

Outreach and Public Involvement

Initial review will be focused internally, identifying policy topics to present for Board consideration. Any proposed Oregon Administrative Rule changes will adhere to the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) outlined in Chapter 183.

Topic: Bureau of Land Management – West Oregon Operating Plan

Overview/Purpose

The Division anticipates potential changes to the protection system with BLM's interest to adjust fire protection under the West Oregon Operating Plan. Depending on these outcomes, the Division may be seeking a POP for the 23-25 ARB to address the adequate level of protection needs of Oregon's protection system.

Board Deliverables with Timelines

The Division anticipates potential changes to the BLM -Western Oregon Operating Plan:

- BLM, Western Oregon Operating Plan Status Update – **March 2022**

Outreach and Public Involvement

There has been and continues to be, outreach and work revolving around this topic with the BLM, Governor's Office, congressional delegation, LFO, OFIC, EFCC, and others.

Fire Protection Work Plan	2022							2023							2024	
	Jan	Mar	Apr	Jun	Jul	Sep	Nov	Jan	Mar	Apr	Jun	July	Sep	Nov	Jan	Mar
WORK IN PROGRESS OR EXPECTED ITEMS																
Issue: Agency Budget & Senate Bill 762 Implementation																
<i>Milestones</i>																
• WUI Definition & Criteria		d		D												
• Wildfire Risk Classification		d		D												
• Certified Burn Manager/Prescribed Fire Program					d		D									
• Baseline Fire Protection Standards					d											D
• Prevention Program Advancement					i				d		D					
• BLM West Oregon Operating Plan (i)		TBD														
Issue: Annual and Ongoing Topics																
<i>Milestones</i>																
• Approve Forest Protection District and Rangeland Protection Association Annual Budgets				D							D					
• Review Letters from FPA’s to State Forester				i							i					
• Fire Season Reports				i	i	i					i	i	i			
• Smoke Management Annual Update		i							i							
• Approve Forest Protection Association Agreements (As Needed)																
• Rangeland Protection Association Formation (As Needed)																

Matrix Key:

TBD – To be decided

i – Informational item

d – Preceding Decision item

D – Final Decision item