



Committee for Family Forestlands  
Forest Legacy and Stewardship Program Working Group

## Charter & Operating Principles

5-11-2020

### I. Background & Purpose

The Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (Act, 16 U.S.C. 2103A), as amended, empowered the USDA Forest Service to partner with state forestry agencies to provide technical and financial assistance to private forest landowners. These programs help landowners balance timber management with the conservation of water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, wildfire management, and opportunities for outdoor recreation. Among others, the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) administers the Forest Stewardship and Forest Legacy Programs.

The Forest Legacy Program (FLP) is a conservation program that supports the protection of privately owned forest lands through conservation easements or land purchases. Protection of private forests through the FLP maintains public benefits, including opportunities to hunt, fish, and camp, clean and abundant drinking water, habitat for fish and wildlife, and timber, fuel wood, and other forest products.

The Forest Stewardship Program (FSP) provides assistance to owners of nonindustrial private forestland (NIPF) where good stewardship, including agroforestry practices, will enhance and sustain multiple forest resources and contribute to healthy and resilient landscapes. The Forest Stewardship Program focuses on three main areas:

- 1) Assisting landowners to actively manage their land and related resources;
- 2) Keeping land in a productive and healthy condition for present and future owners; and
- 3) Increasing the economic benefits of land while conserving the natural environment.

The Act stipulates that each State Forester or equivalent state official must establish a State Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee. The Committee shall include, to the extent practicable, individuals representing the following:

- The Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA), and the Cooperative Extension Service
- NRCS State Technical Committee
- Local Government
- Soil and water conservation districts
- Consulting foresters



## Committee for Family Forestlands Forest Legacy and Stewardship Program Working Group

- Environmental organizations
- Forest products industry
- Forest landowners
- Land trust organizations
- Conservation organizations
- State fish and wildlife agency
- Tribal representatives

Existing state committees may serve as the State Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee if their membership includes the interests specified above. The Committee's primary functions are:

- To provide advice and recommendations to the State Forester concerning implementation of the Forest Stewardship Program, and other associated landowner assistance and cost-share programs.
- To provide assistance and recommendations concerning the development, implementation, and updating of the statewide assessment and resource strategy (Forest Action Plan).

### **II. Roles & Responsibilities**

The Forest Legacy and Stewardship Program Working Group (Working Group) shall be organized under the Committee for Family Forestlands (CFF) and tasked with providing formal review and recommendations to ODF staff on matters related to the Forest Stewardship and Forest Legacy Programs. The Working Group shall be acknowledged as the body that serves as the State Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee. Primary areas of review include the following:

- Review and ranking of annual applications submitted to the Forest Legacy and Community Forestry Programs;
- Review and feedback to proposed changes in implementation of the Forest Stewardship Program or related landowner assistance programs;
- Review and feedback to proposed revisions of Oregon's Forest Management Planning System (aka, Uniform Plan);
- Review and feedback for updates and revisions to the State Forest Action Plan; and
- Provide advice and support in maintaining the partnerships necessary for statewide implementation of these programs, including appropriate outreach and training.



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The Working Group shall convene at least once annually; more frequently as determined necessary by ODF staff for program implementation. At its discretion, the Working Group may elect to provide an annual report to CFF.

### **III. Working Group Membership**

The Working Group shall be chaired by an Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) staff liaison. The chair will facilitate meetings and communications among the group. The chair will also be responsible for maintaining the Working Group Charter and a current membership list.

To the extent practicable, Working Group membership shall include representatives from the organizations outlined in the Act. Representatives shall be drawn from CFF or the community at large. Working Group members who do not have a seat on CFF may attend regular CFF meetings, but they may not vote with CFF membership. When CFF vacancies exist, Working Group members may be considered to fill them.

Working Group members may be identified through CFF and/or through informal outreach by ODF staff or any member of the Working Group.

### **IV. Operating Principles**

The Working Group shall use consensus as a means for developing recommendations to ODF staff. Discussion may occur in person or over e-mail between meetings. Key principles to be observed include the following:

- Make a good faith effort to participate in scheduled meetings and provide requested review and feedback in a timely manner;
- Comment constructively and specifically;
- Operate according to, and stay focused on, the Working Group's core responsibilities;
- Represent the needs, concerns, and views of the constituent group each Working Group member represents; and
- Clearly identify any conflicts of interest emerging from an affiliation or relationship a member may have to a project or program brought before the Working Group for consideration or review.

This Charter shall annually be reviewed and revised by the Working Group to ensure structure and function remain consistent with the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act.