

**Work Plan: Emerging and Overarching Issues**

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**BACKGROUND**

The Work Plan process is designed to create a systematic way for the Board to identify issues and set priorities that lead to specific decisions and products. The process is also designed to link with the biennial budget cycle where resources are identified for, and allocated to, Department programs.

The Board of Forestry work plans are organized around the core business functions of the agency. There are work plans for each of the major divisions within the agency: Administrative, Protection from Fire, Private Forests, and State Forests. In general, the Division work plans map directly to key department businesses to promote integration of Board and Staff work on priority issues for rule changes, development of legislative concepts and policy option packages, or direction to the agency on major policy changes (i.e., decision making).

The process of developing work plans provides a number of advantages including:

- Allowing staff to more efficiently allocate time among multiple demands,
- Providing the public with a better idea about when to provide input, and
- Organizing the Board’s work so that it leads to specific decisions

The Emerging and Overarching Issues work plan is intended to allow the Board more flexibility for spontaneity and exploration of topics not yet ready for decision making or inclusion in one of the division work plans. In this work plan, staff will conduct background research on topics of

interest to the Board, identify time lines for discussion, and provide the foundation for division work plan items or allow items to sunset if action will not be taken on the topic.

## **ISSUE/TOPIC: CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION**

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Oregon's forests are strongly influenced by climate and topography. Modeled predictions of changes in climate from increasing concentration of atmospheric carbon dioxide present additional risks to sustainability of forest ecosystems. The issue of climate change is a complex phenomena predicted to manifest primarily as an increase in average temperature, over several decades. Numerous scientific articles have been generated that predict a spectrum of changes in climatic patterns that carry significant implications for the health and sustainability of forest ecosystems.

There have been several efforts over the past two decades to integrate climate change within forest policy and management. Staff within ODF have made, and continue to make, contributions in various task forces, workgroups, technical committees, and research projects that focus on the issue of climate change. An annotated history of these efforts will be useful to the Board of Forestry to inform any future discussions and debate regarding climate change policies or research and forest management.

Predicted changes in climate patterns have been used to model the likely effects on the geographical distributions of individual species of trees, other forest plants, and wildlife. However, future climate projections are accompanied by three forms of uncertainty in emissions scenarios, physical response of models, and natural variability. Adaptive forest conservation and management policies must be built on accurate and reliable evidence of actual changes in forest vegetation, however, rather than solely on uncertain future predictions. However, detecting, quantifying and mapping actual changes in forest vegetation across large landscapes require robust monitoring and analysis systems with skilled personnel. The viability of current federally administered forest vegetation monitoring and analysis is uncertain. This work plan directs ODF to form a committee to evaluate the idea of planning and conducting a workshop intended to develop a common understanding and commitment among the scientific community and natural resource management agencies about supporting and expanding current forest monitoring and analysis for climate change adaptation planning.

### **Purpose and Expected Results**

Climate change is an issue that is not completely understood, but has the potential to negatively affect forests in a number of ways. Therefore, the Board will benefit from gathering background information on past work and potential options to prepare and make forests less vulnerable to climate change. This project will:

1. Provide the Board of Forestry a history of the work on climate change policy in Oregon, staff contributions to that work, and previous Board involvement in the issue.

2. Present to the Board the primary risks to the forest ecosystems and options for increasing resiliency that have been identified from completed literature reviews and syntheses on climate change and increases in the concentration of atmospheric greenhouse gases.
3. Identify monitoring, research, and realistic policy alternatives available to the Board of Forestry.
4. Integrate results of current research and indicators, developed through partnership with the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute (OCCRI), into ODF's Forest Assessment project.
5. Explore the potential value of a workshop to identify how the research community and natural resource management agencies might coordinate efforts and resources to monitor and analyze changes in the geographic distribution of forest species that are predicted to occur from changes in climate.

### **Scope**

A great deal of work over the past two decades on climate change has already been completed in Oregon. It is the intent of this workplan to not duplicate existing information and the work of others but rather identify gaps in knowledge and information in order to focus work efforts where staff and the Board can make the meaningful contributions. Therefore, this work plan is focused on the adaptation-based items listed within the Purpose section of this work plan.

It is not the intent of this work plan to focus on:

- carbon neutrality of forest biomass as substitution for fossil fuels—extensive analyses and thorough debate has already been conducted on this issue related to mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions through forest management. Committing staff time to further work would not add new information or value.
- forest management to mitigate industrial greenhouse gas emissions—The Oregon Global Warming Commission has produced the Roadmap to 2020 identifying where and how forests in Oregon might contribute to additional carbon sequestration. Recommendations from the Roadmap to 2020 were presented to Board at the November 2010 meeting.
- forestry and carbon markets—ODF staff have been researching and monitoring the development of carbon markets to identify opportunities for Oregon that currently do not exist. Staff have identified that is difficult for ODF as a public land management agency to enter into carbon markets because crediting protocols are disadvantageous to public agencies.

However, the history of efforts to develop climate change policy in Oregon will likely contain relevant ideas related to mitigation policies for forest ecosystems.

### **Tasks**

1. Organize and present information to the Board describing the history of climate change efforts in Oregon including information from:
  - a. task forces, workgroups, technical committees, Global Warming Commission
  - b. scientific and policy-based literature that identifies risks to forest ecosystems and policy alternatives.

2. Organize and schedule a panel of experts to discuss climate change adaptation issues and policy alternatives that the Board of Forestry might pursue.
3. Develop analyses and indicators of change in the geography of forest species from the effects of climate change.
  - a. identify data and analyses for structure of indicators
  - b. collect data and perform analyses
  - c. report on results and integrate indicators within the Forest Assessment

**Deliverables**

1. A presentation that provides an annotated history of State-led efforts and literature syntheses that have been completed focused on the issue of climate change.
2. Expert panel to discuss state of the climate change science and potential policy alternatives the Board might pursue.
3. Manuscript that explains the results of analyses for indicators for the effect of climate change on the geographical distribution of tree species in Oregon forests.
4. A final set of recommendations.

**Stakeholder/public involvement**

Public comments and input will be taken at Board of Forestry meetings.

**Timeframes and milestones**

History presentation and literature review	completed September 2013
Panel Discussion:	completed September 2013
Develop indicators:	June 2014
Final Recommendations	Summer 2014

## ISSUE/TOPIC: DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF OREGON INDICATORS FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

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Oregon's Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management are intended as a metric to inform the Board of Forestry (Board) on pertinent issues, to measure performance, and inform policy, regulatory, and management decisions. In order to ensure that Board members have up to date information in a timely fashion, the Indicators are intended to be updated and reported on a regular basis. Indicators rely on a broad base of data spanning multiple contributors among different agencies and organizations. The data and analyses presented in the suite of indicators are not only intended for Board use, but can also be used by external stakeholders (e.g., the Annual Timber Harvest Report and *Forest, Farms and People*, focused on changing land use trends).

Updating the Indicators leads to a number of issues. As presented at the September 2012 Board of Forestry meeting in Salem, the Indicators rely on data that are in some cases collected annually, biennially, or over five to ten year periods. This leads to issues of regularly reporting data and analyses (i.e., conditions and trends). Likewise, some data that were used for indicators in the past may no longer be collected (or the methods of collection have been altered making comparisons from one time period to another difficult if not impossible). Some indicators have not been reported on since their inception due to a lack of data and/or a lack of funding. To be useful, the Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management must be reviewed and revised from time to time to ensure that:

1. They are measuring intended trends and conditions,
2. Data is reliable and accurate, and
3. They are useful to the Board for informing their decision-making.

### **Goals and Objectives**

The Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management should tell a story that is informative and consistent. This requires a clear set of goals as well as a reliable suite of data. This work plan focuses on doing a quality check of available data while seeking out other useful data.

The Board, as well as external audiences, is served by the information that is gathered and reported on from the suite of Indicators. This project entails:

1. Working with the Board to assess whether the Indicators provide pertinent and useful information (i.e., whether the Indicators provide early warning for trends tracking in the wrong direction),
2. Looking at alternative data sources (in regards to quality and consistent reporting) for existing indicators, and
3. Addressing the need for adding indicators (e.g., ecosystem services).

### **Scope**

This work plan focuses primarily on addressing the usefulness and underlying data of Indicators for the use of the Board and the general public. Specific attention will focus on reporting socio-economic conditions and trends as well as seeking out information on ecosystem services. The indicators are designed to provide information on high-level outcomes at a statewide scale (i.e., not designed for use a smaller scales like a watershed).

### **Deliverables**

1. A presentation on conditions and trends using current Indicator/data framework
2. A process to determine changes in Indicators and data sources
3. An updated set of indicators and data for Board approval. For the indicators that have questionable data sets, new viable options will be provided regarding data that could be used.
4. A presentation on conditions and trends utilizing the updated Indicator/data framework

### **Task List**

1. Present the current trends and conditions for Indicators at September 2013 Board Meeting.
2. Evaluate the current list of indicators with a focus on whether each suite of indicators adequately describes the progress towards meeting the goals in the Forestry Program for Oregon (FPFO).
  - a. Evaluate the data that are currently available for each indicator.
  - b. Evaluate if data accurately measures what it is suppose to
  - c. Evaluate if data is consistent and reliable – especially in the future
3. Determine what additional data are available that could be used to measure indicators.

Determine what data is both collectable and useful for measuring the indicators

  - i. Emphasis on Water Quality (Goal D)
  - ii. Emphasis on Ecosystem Services (Goal B Indicator C) and
  - iii. Emphasis on Socioeconomics (Goal B Indicator(s) A, B and D)
4. Develop recommendations for the Board regarding updating the suite of indicators and data sets that should be used to measure FPFO goals.
5. Present the trends and conditions for forest resource using the new Indicators at September 2015 Board Meeting.

### **Stakeholder/public involvement**

Targeted outreach to stakeholders will be used to generate ideas and gather input on individual indicators on an as needed basis. Public comments and input will be taken at Board of Forestry meetings.

**Time Frame**

Seek approval of Indicators Work Plan – Presentation on Caveats and Issues with current Indicators.....	June 2013
Indicators Presentation Using Current Framework and Data .....	September 2013
Initial Staff Discussion Regarding Updating Suite of Indicators.....	June 2014
Follow-up Discussion Regarding Updating Suite of Indicators .....	November 2014
Final Discussion Regarding Updating Suite of Indicators – Seek Approval of Suite ..	March 2015
Indicators Presentation Using New Framework and Data.....	September 2015

**ISSUE/TOPIC: EXPLORE NON-REGULATORY POLICY OPTIONS FOR FOREST CONSERVATION**

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Oregon's forests provide clean water, recreational opportunities, sustainable family wage jobs in many forest related sectors, and habitat for many different wildlife species. While Oregon has a strong regulatory system that includes a forest practices act and strict land use planning laws, there is increasing concern that forest fragmentation, as opposed to conversion, is unduly impacting the environmental, economic and social viability of these resources.

In addition to Oregon's regulatory system, The Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds has demonstrated that voluntary non-regulatory incentives can be important tools to enhance and deliver a broad range of conservation benefits. Yet, because of the regulatory system, the state has not aggressively pursued voluntary non-regulatory conservation investments (e.g., conservation easements) as other states have.

**Purpose and Expected Results**

The purpose of this work is to explore voluntary non-regulatory options available to maintain working forests and provide incentives for conservation benefits on forestlands. To create a successful program, the State needs to identify specific goals, create funding a mechanism(s), and create a delivery system (i.e., tax incentive, conservation easement, etc.).

Staff will help the Board and Governor's office review the conservation mechanisms actively used in other states and the relative effectiveness of those mechanisms, develop data tools that can help the Board weigh-in on forestry related goals, and provide the Board with policy recommendations for implementing a strategy.

**Scope**

The Governor has expressed interest in exploring conservation incentives for a broad range of land uses, including agricultural and forest lands. Executive level discussions about obtaining funding for conservation programs will occur at the Governor's natural resource cabinet and other locations. Staff will keep the Board informed and look for ways the Board can assist in those efforts.

**Deliverables**

1. Report on potential voluntary non-regulatory mechanisms to maintain working forests and enhance conservation
2. Staff support to help the Governor's office to identify potential funding mechanisms
3. Information and data describing priority issues for working forest conservation
4. Recommended policy options for Board consideration

**Tasks**

1. Commission a report exploring conservation mechanisms actively used in other states to protect forest values (e.g., conservation easements, philanthropic efforts, conservation bonds, removing regulatory barriers, etc) and work with landowner representatives to determine their potential effectiveness in Oregon.
2. Provide staff support to Executive (Agency Directors, Governor’s Office) exploration of funding options, both monetarily and through policy levers (regulatory/tax relief).
3. Present data and analysis to the Board on priority issues for working forest conservation
4. Identify linkages between the identified conservation needs and potential conservation mechanisms (identified in the report). Recommend policy options for the Board to consider.

**Timeframe with Milestones [significant dates – Board action]**

**Resources required**

**Group participants and roles (optional)**

**Stakeholder/public involvement (optional)**

Targeted outreach to stakeholders will be used to generate ideas and gather input on individual items on an as needed basis. Public comments and input will be taken at Board of Forestry meetings.

**ISSUE/TOPIC: DEVELOP OPTIONS TO HELP MAINTAIN FOREST LANDOWNER VIABILITY**

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The forest industry is very important to Oregon's economy especially in rural areas of the state. In addition to timber, forestlands also produce non-timber forest products, recreation, ecosystem services, wildlife habitat, water, and other values that could be captured in markets. All forest values depend on having a stable land base, and timber values alone cannot compete with development values. Therefore, Oregon is likely to have erosion of the land base without identifying additional market based options to increase the revenues from forestland management. A central question is how to diversify revenue streams for landowners.

**Purpose and Expected Results**

Explore potential alternate revenue sources for forest landowners, in addition to timber production, and options to increase markets for those sources of revenue. Make recommendations to the Board about policy changes that could help expand or enhance alternate revenue sources.

**Scope**

This project in the work plan will concentrate on developing recommendations to increase the viability of forest operations for landowners. Options for conservation incentives (e.g., conservation easements) will be pursued under a different Issue/Objective in the Emerging Issues work plan and will not be part of this work. Additional work to assist the manufacturing portion of the forest industry will be accomplished through the Governor's Executive Order on Promoting Wood Products and through ODF's Forest Cluster project.

**Deliverables**

1. Process to identify and prioritize alternative revenue sources.
2. Paper(s) about potential additional revenue sources and other options to enhance or expand revenue sources.
3. Recommendations for policy changes.

**Tasks**

The following is a short description of each task that will be undertaken in this project.

1. Process to identify potential markets/options (i.e., carbon, water, recreation, non-timber forest products, ecosystem services, biomass, etc.)
  - a. Identify a broad range of potential revenue sources for landowners.
  - b. Narrow the focus of the work plan to the most promising few ideas (i.e., potential revenue stream, time to maturity of market, etc.).

2. Develop one or more personal services contracts to research the workings of the markets, barriers to implementation, and potential options that could be used to enhance or expand the markets.
3. Develop a suite of recommendations for the Board to consider.

**Timeframe with Milestones [significant dates – Board action]**

Jan. 2014 – Draft work plan for Board review.

March 2014 – Finalize work plan

September 2014 – Refined list of potential revenue sources to explore

March 2015 – Research papers on potential revenue sources

June 2015 – Recommendations for Board consideration

**Resources required**

Contract(s) – \$10,000 to 20,000

**Group participants and roles**

A small work group has been organized to help refine the work plan, generate ideas, and help develop recommendations. It includes Linc Cannon (OFIC), Jennifer Allen (PSU), Jim Cathcart (ODF), Jim James (OSWA), Greg Miller (Weyerhaeuser), Cynthia Glick (USFS), and Brandon Kaetzel (ODF).

**Stakeholder/public involvement**

The work group will reach out to experts in different fields to discuss ideas and help develop the scope and deliverables of potential studies. The work group will also consult with standing committees and other organizations interested in the topics (e.g., Committee for Family Forestlands, Stewardship Coordinating Committee, etc.).

**ISSUE/TOPIC: FEDERAL FORESTS**

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The health and sound stewardship of federal forestlands are critical to Oregon's current and future well-being. Our economy relies on them for much-needed family-wage jobs - particularly in our rural communities where such jobs are becoming increasingly scarce. Oregon's infrastructure, such as roads and schools, need the revenue that can be generated from federal forests. Our citizens and the visitors to our state rely on these forests for the vast array of recreational opportunities they provide. The environmental benefits and ecosystem services derived from these lands are essential –biodiversity, critical habitat for a multitude of species, and watersheds that provide abundant, clean water for ecosystems and human communities.

**Purpose and Expected Results**

Board of Forestry subcommittee to focus on issues of federal forest policy and to assist the full Board coordinate and act on needed reform with the Governor's Office, the Congressional Delegation, the Oregon Legislature, the Federal land management agencies, and other stakeholders and constituents.

**Goals**

1. Articulate and recommend to the full Board of Forestry a response to the Governor's request that the Board develop and carry forward strong statements that make the case for the state's role in federal forest policy and that articulate key principles that can shape federal forest policy change, leading to sustainable management of National Forest system lands.
2. Identify and recommend to the full Board any specific actions, tools, events or involvement the Board of Forestry can implement that contribute to this work.
3. Serve as an ongoing thinking and idea-generation group for the full Board related to these topics.
4. Provide Board of Forestry capacity for working with other agencies and organizations to promote federal forest policy change.

**Scope**

The intent is to provide active leadership on this critical issue, to convene work groups as necessary to develop more detailed ideas for reform, and to support a suite of efforts happening at a regional and national level policy scale. This Subcommittee's work is not intended to duplicate, replace or necessarily update earlier work done by the Federal Forests Advisory Committee, but to build on that work and provide active engagement by Board members on implementing the recommendations included in their 2009 report and otherwise generated through the implementation of this work plan.

**Deliverables**

1. A recommended set of principles and statement for full Board discussion and adoption.

2. Recommendations to the full Board for specific actions in pursuit of the principles.
3. Work with the Governor's office and Congressional Delegation to implement specific action items.

### **Tasks**

1. Support statement from the Board for the Governor's recommended budget on forest health
2. Identify federal issues and prioritize area of focus
3. Draft key Principles in response to Governor's request
4. Develop strong leadership statements and Actions Items for changes in forest policy
5. Focus voice of the Board in advocating for urgency in addressing federal forest policy, articulate key notions through communication and policy tools
6. Develop fact sheets with Board's policy position
7. Coordinate with the Governor's office to promote actions with the federal delegation
8. Coordinate with other interests and partners

### **Timeframe with Milestones**

*July 2013* – Draft Principles and Roles document for discussion/adoption. Full Board approved the Principles and Roles as working documents for the sub-committee to continue to refine.

*November 2013* – Draft Action Items for full Board discussion

*January 2014* – Seek Full Board approval of Action Items

*July 2014* – Update/progress report on action items

*November 2014* – Update/progress report on action items

**Oregon Board of Forestry Work Plans  
2014 Matrix  
*Emerging and Overarching Issues***

**MATRIX**

Emerging and Overarching Issues Work Plan	Board of Forestry Agenda						
	Jan	Mar	Apr	June	July	Sept	Nov
<b>Climate change adaptation</b>							
<i>Milestones</i>							
❖ Annotated history of State-led efforts on climate change	Done						
❖ Panel to discuss state of the climate change science		X					
❖ Manuscript on indicators for the effect of climate change on the geographical distribution of tree species				X			
❖ Recommendations for Board consideration	TBD						
<b>Development and maintenance of Oregon Criteria and Indicators</b>							
<i>Milestones</i>							
❖ Presentation on conditions and trends using current Indicator/data framework	Done						
❖ Determine changes in Indicators and data sources				X			X
❖ Updated set of indicators and data for Board approval	TBD						
<b>Explore non-regulatory options for forest conservation</b>							
<i>Milestones</i>							
❖ Draft work plan	TBD						
<b>Develop options to maintain forest landowner viability</b>							
<i>Milestones</i>							
❖ Refined list of potential revenue sources to explore						X	
❖ Research papers on potential revenue sources	TBD						
❖ Recommendations for Board consideration	TBD						
<b>Federal Forests</b>							
<i>Milestones</i>							
❖ Draft work plan	TBD						