Welcome and introductions

- Committee members and guests introduced themselves and their representation.

Opening remarks and identification of new concepts

- Fire Protection Chief Grafe made opening statements, highlighting and recognizing the work group’s focus and attention in advising the department in how to face the new 10-year average. The work group is playing a critical advisory role on the full suite of opportunities and challenges that ODF faces in providing a sustainable work force moving forward. Transition of recommendations into the division aims at getting into the practical work around implementation of advice and counsel that has been received; and integrating them into the division’s current processes. Initial priority for today’s meeting is to vet out lingering concerns and prioritizations that will aid the co-chairs in creating a smooth transition into the division.

Discussion Topics

- **Shared Direction from FPR Committee**
  - Travis Medema opened up the topic, noting the appreciation and thanks the players in the complete and coordinated system have expressed toward the work group and the work group’s goal. He acknowledged there has been an energy focus around initial attack. A tremendous effort has taken place in a short amount of time, with 85 preliminary ideas brought forth. This highlights the work group’s dedication to developing a truly sustainable organization.
  - There is high interest in the work group’s goal, not only within the agency but from outside cooperators as well.
  - Goal of today’s meeting: Attempt to identify a transition.
- **Vision/Pathway Moving Forward**
  - FPRC Charter goal for the work group was reviewed.
  - Healthy positioning of the division overall was felt to have occurred, with the transition period the next big focus for the June 6 FPR Meeting.
  - The last work group meeting in May will be used to fill in needs identified in this meeting.
  - Packages/suggestions will be handed off today to the division for review and additional staff work.
  - Some members are not confident that the work group is ideally positioned to fully transfer issue papers to the division, given that some members have not seen all the issue papers. It was clarified that the co-chairs will remain in place to provide further support moving forward.
  - Roger Beyer would like to see a discussion around priorities and is unsure at what point that will happen. He doesn’t feel it has been clarified whether that discussion will occur with this work group or somewhere else.
At this meeting the work group will help prioritize the issue papers, and those ranked high on the list will be refined by the division and brought to the May 17 meeting. At that session, the papers will be more fully reviewed. The drafts are at very early stages, and the group acknowledged that prioritization is key to moving them forward.

Work-to-Date Review

- PowerPoint presentation from April 5 FPRC meeting walked through
- Capacity-Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) discussion
  - Identifies need for management in aviation, prevention, fire business and boots-on-the-ground fire line.
  - All of the suggestions will potentially affect the budgets.
  - It was asked if more conversations have occurred around being able to use other agencies’ staffs, such as Fish and Wildlife. The topic was explained to be in queue for discussion.
  - It was noted that the number of aviation contracts has grown from five to 15 in the last few years. This fact was used to highlight that, from a business perspective, the magnitude of risk currently on the landscape has more than quadrupled. ODF has a new and increased kind of business. Thus when talking about adding capacity, the discussion really revolves around adding capacity to bring what the agency is already doing up to a defined higher level.
  - Nancy Hirsch felt this was different from the training and prevention pieces, in that those would be more focused on peak fire seasons and an ability to draw from already available trained resources. Nancy sees this as a nuance between current business needs and an eye toward a sustainable organization.
  - Are there opportunities to expand the use of FireIce (advanced retardant product) and leverage this expansion to help ensure retention of seasonal staff by creating jobs that extend into the winter months?
  - Comment was made that a possibly longer fire season should be discussed.
  - Nancy stressed the value of considering other staffing options, such as large and small landowners, who could be trained and prepared for deployment outside of ODF’s standard fire season hiring window for seasonals.

Training Funds discussion

- Identifies training needs for other ODF divisions, military, industry, rural fire departments, and other state agencies. This could include training outside operational activities, such as for FEMA payments/audits.
- Seasonals working on federal lands and federal fires is considered a good opportunity to expand their fire knowledge, and it could also enable better retention of seasonal staff.

Equipment and Technology Funding discussion

- Identifies cameras, fire caches, remote communications, and a common operating picture.
- Common Operating Picture defined as “a system that allows a comprehensive feel for what is occurring.” Can include Automatic Vehicle Locators (AVL), lightning data, weather data, fire perimeters and cameras—all placed into one database location that would be real-time (fire intelligence). Alaska and British Columbia each have these systems.
Would include data from Forest Service, BLM and other relevant cooperators.

- Currently piloting FLAMES (in-house data system) and IntTerra (out-of-house data system).
- Forest Service currently uses IntTerra.
- Would be an IT business solution requiring funding and future capacity in order to be implemented and maintained.

### Admin/Business Practices discussion

- Includes EFC/FEMA/Secretary of State auditing efficiencies, policies and Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs) and fire restrictions, fire business enhancements, contract reviews, capacity cooperation from other state agencies (payroll as an example), and private external capacity.

Roger Beyer asked that since FEMA has auditing requirements, should we conform all of our auditing to those standards? Or approach FEMA and explain our methodology, and then try to develop a tailored auditing process? Could we work with the Governor’s office to explain to FEMA that ODF’s EFC auditing process is more extensive and suggest therefore that FEMA examine that audit rather than make ODF go through the process twice; particularly since the EFC process is far more extensive than the FEMA process? Would like to see these questions considered/worked on ASAP.

### Investment Opportunities

### May 17 Prioritization

- (High) Need more firefighters and training officers to help support more fire staffing. Could consider having one training officer per area. Strong support for idea that these two go hand-in-hand, and that this relationship needs to be thoroughly vetted in order to create a truly sustainable organization.

- (High) Equipment resources also noted as key, which leads to a further need for equipment operators that are fully trained. Also, learning the federal processes can be a complicating factor, and having more resource bosses that are well versed in different agency policies is critical.

- (High) Catching fires at initial attack, thus keeping them small, was cited as critical for the agency. Investing in firefighters and finding ways to retain the well-rounded ones by creating jobs that last longer than a few months out of the year. Aviation also mentioned as a critical aspect for initial attack, and it was felt that greater staffing support is extremely important for ODF in this regard.

- Could an incentive such as fire management positions and PERS (i.e., Police and Fire retirement benefits), be further expanded to help keep non-fire line staff engaged in the system? Was felt that the PERS system is currently difficult to alter, but it was agreed that finding incentives is key for future discussions.

- Efficiencies and Initial Attack: Better use of contracted resources, including better pre-contracting for resource readiness and pre-participation, were cited as important. Currently, contracting methodology is felt to be cumbersome. Other obstacles to resources seeking to be brought under contract include the slow payment process, and slow communication of qualifying standards. Could examine current types of contracting services and adapt them to better fit needs.
• Industrial forestland operations are not used enough. When fire danger rises too high, these resources are sent home; yet they could be used during critical fire danger periods to help patrol, mitigate hazards, and also perform initial attack.
  
  • The business structure governing how private contractors are handled was developed by the state, and in many instances it does not match up with how the private sector operates. Not getting paid for two or three months can be a huge obstacle to recruitment of high-quality, effective private contractors.
  
  o ODF has worked with FEMA to receive earlier, smaller payments. Could some similar type of negotiation be worked through to better pay private operators?
  
  • ODF is also going through a contracting policy review currently and will be addressing some of the concerns raised above.

  ❖ Grafe discussed biennial budget packages currently being created, and he asked for recommendations for best areas to invest in.

  • Some voiced the opinion that the Common Operating Picture is not a strong candidate for initial investment, since technology alone does not put out fires. Support for this kind of system was also voiced, with proponents noting it would allow for a better flow of crucial information, further monitoring of safety concerns, and will become a necessary tool as technology continues to make large changes. The need for a balance was noted, with staff capacity and training cited as more critical for investment consideration.

  • Comment was made that fixing the business process will require a lot of the components presented in the issue papers. Cautioned to be methodical in decisions/topics to pursue so as to not become too heavy in one area and too light in another. More resources and training, and an adequate system to support those, needs to be considered.

  • Key point was raised that the question cannot just be around adding capacity but also the time lag that is inherent in creating capacity (i.e., personnel that are fully trained and have adequate fire management experience). It takes time to give people live fire experience, and it takes up to five years for fully competent fire personnel to be added and integrated into the evolving system.

  • With not a lot of extra legislative dollars, how will ODF add capacity in the short-term? The Federal Job Corps used as an example, as well as limitations voiced such as safety and age standards.

  ❖ Severity

  • High interest expressed in severity and aviation resources - currently a $5 million program. How will more money be used and in what increments? What would $3, $4, and $5 million blocks gain the agency? Or $0.5, $1, $1.5, blocks? If these blocks are better explained, that could help the Legislature identify good severity investments.

• Wrap-up/Feedback and Next Meeting

  Topics for May 17 meeting

  1. A Priority Summary Report from this work group will be sent with the agenda for the May 17 meeting that clearly outlines the highest priorities needing to be discussed.

  2. Organizational sustainability and what does that look like?

  3. An incremental severity funding analysis from the Division (consider using historical cases to show funding increases bolster initial-attack efforts.

  4. Cross-walk priorities outlined today with the business cases at the May 17 meeting, and gain feedback that will roll up to the June FPRC meeting.
Attendees

- Doug Grafe, ODF FPRC Chair
- Travis Medema, ODF Sustainable Organization Workgroup Co-chair
- Brian Pew, ODF Sustainable Organization Workgroup Co-chair
- Ron Graham, ODF Deputy Chief Protection
- Brett Brownscombe, Governor’s Natural Resource Office (phone)
- Tom Imeson, Board of Forestry Chair
- Kristina McKnitt, OFIC
- Nancy Hirsch, ODF FPRC Co-Chair
- Crystal Bader, ODF Core Team
- Jamie Paul, FPRC Project Manager
- John Tillotson, ODF State Forests
- Matt Mackey, ODF Assist. Unit Forester
- Seth Barnes, OFIC
- Roger Beyer, OR Small Woodlands Association
- Randy Hereford, Starker Forests (phone)
- Joe Justice (phone)
- Joe Hessel (phone)
- David Weaver, ODF Wallowa (phone)
- Joseph Goebel, ODF Wallowa (phone)
- Rex Storm, Associated Oregon Loggers
- Mike Totey, ODF District Forester
- Brent O’nion, ODF Stewardship Forester
- Amanda Rich, Nature Conservatory (phone)
- Bob Young, ODF Wildfire Policy Workgroup Co-Chair
- Rod Nichols, ODF Public Affairs
- Major Corey Jones, Deputy Director Military Support
- Amy Patrick, OFIC
- Amelia Eveland, Secretary of State Auditing Team
- Ann Walker, Private Landowner
- Whitney Lanham, ODF Core Team
- Adam Meyer, Oregon Conservation Network