

## Elliott State Forest Research Advisory Committee

November 19, 2020

Advisory Committee Website: <https://www.oregon.gov/dsl/land/pages/elliott.aspx>

Advisory Committee Members present (via Zoom): Steve Andringa, Bob Sallinger, Michael Langley, Mary Paulson, Paul Beck, Eric Farm, Melissa Cribbins, Asha Aiello, Mike Kennedy, Ken McCall, Mark Stern, Keith Tymchuk, Vicki Walker (convenor), Thomas DeLuca, and Bob Van Dyk.

Department of State Lands and Oregon State University Staff present (via Zoom): Geoff Huntington, Robert Underwood, Ali Hansen, Katy Kavanagh, Randy Rosenberger, Caitlyn Reilley, Katie Fast, and Bill Ryan.

Oregon Consensus Facilitation Team present (via Zoom): Peter Harkema, Jennah Stillman, Brett Brownscombe, and Amy Delahanty.

### Action Items

Action Item	Who	Date
Circulate draft November 19 meeting summary to AC members for review and comment.	OC	Completed.
Continue effort to revise and reach agreement on governance approach for ESRF.	OSU/DSL with Advisory Committee members	Ongoing

### Welcome, Agenda Review and Process Overview

#### General Updates

Facilitator Peter Harkema welcomed the group and invited members to do a round of introductions. He then reviewed the agenda topics with the group, which included advisory committee members hearing a review of proposed Elliott State Research Forest (ESRF) proposal; time for reflections and discussion amongst each other and with OSU; and opportunity for the committee to discuss and strive to agree on approach and content for the December 8 Land Board meeting. Peter highlighted that the Department of State Lands (DSL) has extended the public comment period through November 29, 2020, to provide additional time to members of the public to share their

input on the draft proposal. Written feedback can be provided via DSL's online form, email, or by postal mail (please see [DSL website](#) for additional information).

Department of State Lands Director, Vicki Walker, then welcomed the group and thanked advisory committee members for their continued commitment and dedication to the ESRF process. She acknowledged the Elliott process began, in part, due to Oregonians sharing their voices and input to keep the Elliott public; and this passion and commitment has not waned. Director Walker shared the Department of State Lands knew the future of the Elliott depended on diverse stakeholders coming together; putting in the hours of collaboration; and committed to the process. She stressed that DSL has heard from the public and advisory committee that there is more work to be done, and the agency agrees.

Director Walker stated that following agreement on the direction from the State Land Board on December 8th, DSL expects some / all committee members will continue to work together to agree on the finer details of the proposal (e.g. governance), and encouraged members of the public to stay engaged. Director Walker shared she was thankful for everyone's participation; Oregon Consensus facilitation and staff support; and expressed excitement about the future of this important work.

### **OSU Elliott State Research Forest Proposal**

#### *Review of proposed Elliott State Research Forest proposal*

Tom DeLuca, Dean of OSU's College of Forestry, thanked Director Walker, DSL, and committee members for allowing OSU to pursue the opportunity to turn the Elliott into a research forest. He noted that while OSU does not have all the answers (e.g. a complete inventory for the Elliott), the College of Forestry will present a proposal on December 8th based on the data they have and agreements made through the advisory committee process. He then reviewed the information that will be presented to the Land Board on December 8th with committee members.

Dean DeLuca finalized his presentation by sharing the key takeaways with the group. He shared the research design 1.) creates one of the largest reserve areas on the Oregon Coast; 2.) promotes the growth of early successional and older forests; and 3.) allows for public access, continued recreation, educational partnerships, and local economic benefit. Dean DeLuca highlighted the proposed ESRF research framework allows future generations to ask and answer, "what, in times of rapid change, are the most effective means of ensuring and sustaining biodiversity, ecosystem processes, and ecosystem services while achieving a sustainable wood supply?" He noted the fundamental aspiration for an ESRF is to create an experimental design that is broadly applicable. OSU aims to create a design capable of testing basic knowledge, answering why and how, based on experimentation, and developing and deploying solutions while maintaining the capability to address the current and next generation of forest-related research and policy questions. OSU shared they believe they are well-positioned to achieve those goals.

#### *Governance*

Following Dean DeLuca's presentation, Randy Rosenberger and workgroup members shared an update on their discussions related to governance. On behalf of OSU, Dr. Rosenberger shared the following updates with the group:

- OSU would like to maintain its autonomy to make decisions regarding the management of the forest, but also be held accountable to the public through enforcement and accountability mechanisms. Generally, the governance structure includes transparency mechanisms such as public records availability, noticing advisory group meetings, public comment opportunities, engagement through citizen science opportunities, and others. OSU continues to work with governance workgroup members to outline an enforceability mechanism that is defined and agreed upon by all committee members.
- The proposed governance structure and OSU's relationship to the State Land Board and public, gives the potential for qualifying for the private protocol in the carbon market, although a public protocol is most likely.
- In the interim period before an OSU advisory board is established, OSU is committed to continuing engagement with stakeholders and advisory committee members following the December 8th meeting to work out additional details of the proposal.

Following Dr. Rosenberger's presentation, Peter noted several members of the Governance Subcommittee came to consensus on a draft enforcement and accountability language for OSU's consideration. He then invited members to speak to the intent and approach to develop the draft document. They shared that while members came from different perspectives, they were impressed by the amount of consensus from the outset and the group's willingness to work through areas where there was not consensus. One member highlighted the importance of the foundational documents outlined in the governance proposal that OSU and the research forest will advance, abide by, and be committed to in the long term. Another spoke to several of the document elements, such as third party litigation, public records, and public process. He shared that while those important aspects are included, the governance structure document is a work in progress. With that, there were no questions or concerns related to governance and the committee approved the subgroup to work on their behalf in developing a governance structure with the OSU Elliott team and university leadership.

### *Financials*

Dr. Rosenberger presented a high-level overview of the financial analysis conducted by subcontractors Mason, Bruce, Girard, Inc. to advisory committee members. He shared that financing the management and research programs on the ESRF will be accomplished through a combination of revenue generated from harvests in experimental treatment areas and potential revenue generated through the sale of carbon credits. He noted gifts, grants, and contracts will also help to sustain the research projects on the ESRF. He noted that an additional position (1.0 FTE) public relations coordinator position was included in the assumptions and had not previously been discussed with the full Committee. He then reviewed the annual ESRF financial analysis as well as the estimated budget startup costs associated with the research forest in greater detail. In summary,

the financial analysis showed the research design on the forest has the ability to pay for itself based on the assumptions included in the financial modeling.

The following comments and observations were then shared by several advisory committee members:

- OSU was prudent and conservative in their analysis of the costs and revenue from the forest, increasing the likelihood that the analysis demonstrates that the forest could pay for itself.
- Another was appreciative to see the addition of the public relations coordinator, as this was a suggestion raised in a previous governance subcommittee conversation.
- There was a question whether the narrative included in the proposal regarding thinning in the CRW aligned with the assumptions of the financial modeling. It was suggested OSU better articulate the intent regarding thinning in greater detail of the proposal in that the thinnings are for the purpose of restoring and creating diverse structure in the trajectory of an older forest, and not motivate by revenue generation.
- It's unclear how implementation will unfold "on the ground", so any narrative regarding the financial analysis will need to account for unknowns to ensure decisions are not made from a revenue or board feet goal. Several committee members emphasized the narrative better articulate the restoration goals.
- It was unclear how the Common School Fund will be made whole and noted it was not currently addressed in the draft proposal. DSL stated that decoupling is an important component of the overall package, and spoke to the overall approach and associated timeline with that effort. Geoff Huntington (DSL) explained that DSL, Governor's Office, and Treasurer's Office, have begun work on a structure to address decoupling, and acknowledged they wanted to wait until there was consensus research forest plan among advisory committee members before digging into those discussions in greater specificity. Several initial meetings have been held with state agencies and potential financial contributors, but much of the work will be done in 2021 in conjunction with the continued work of the Habitat Conservation Plan.
- Important to keep in mind road decommissioning and associated costs when talking about restoration in the CRW.

### **December Land Board Meeting Discussion**

Advisory committee members discussed the approach and content for the December 8th Land Board meeting to document member reflections. Peter reminded the group at the last Land Board meeting the committee drafted a joint statement read by Keith Tymchuck on behalf of the group, with additional testimony provided by several committee members. The group agreed that they would like to take a similar approach at the upcoming Land Board meeting, and a small group was formed to craft a joint statement on behalf of the group. Peter then invited members not part of the joint statement subcommittee to provide input to that group. Several members shared it would be important to highlight the need for third-party facilitation in the next phase of the process.

**ACTION ITEM:** The subcommittee will share a finalized statement to DSL by December 4th.

### **Next Steps**

Director Walker outlined near and long-term actions following the December 8th Land Board meeting with the group. She shared DSL, OSU, and interested advisory committee members, will continue to work together to come to agreement on the remaining details; the HCP will continue to be led by DSL, which will include public engagement; development of a carbon project to support the decoupling effort and management of the forest will continue; DSL will work with the legislature in 2021/2022 on what will need to be accomplished in statute; setting forth a financial plan that anticipates transitioning the forest from DSL to OSU; and DSL will ensure the public continues to be engaged following the commitment and direction of the Land Board. Director Walker shared she has been thrilled to be part of this effort and thanked everyone for their hard work and dedication.

Dean DeLuca shared his gratitude for the advisory committee. He shared a lot of progress has been made and there is more work to be done to get the details right. He noted an Elliott State Research Forest is an exciting prospect not only because of the research potential, but because of the collaborative process that is building the pathway forward. He highlighted that this collaborative approach to forming a research forest may be the first of its kind and commended the group on its efforts.

Peter then shared his expectation that advisory committee members will continue to be in communication with their boards, councils, and constituencies about developments to ensure no surprises on December 8. Advisory committee members then provided final reflections. Following this, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30p.m.