

## Elliott State Forest Research Advisory Committee

July 23, 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, Chris Boice, 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): Meliah Masiba, Geoff Huntington, Robert Underwood, Ali Hansen, Anthony Davis, Katy Kavanagh, Randy Rosenberger, Caitlyn Reilley, 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 July 23rd meeting summary to AC members for review and comment.	OC	Completed.
Continue effort to revise and reach agreement on research platform, governance, and other components of a research forest proposal	OSU/DSL with Advisory Committee members	Ongoing

### Welcome, Agenda Review and Process Overview

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 reflections from Land Board offices on the progress to date and next steps; OSU research platform presentation and discussion; general updates from other related efforts and components of the process; and a discussion of wrap up and next steps.

### General Updates

#### *Department of State Lands*

Department of State Lands Director, Vicki Walker, welcomed the group and thanked them for their continued commitment. She then reviewed the staffing changes since the Advisory Committee (AC)

last met in April. She noted Geoff Huntington has transitioned from OSU to the Department of State Lands (DSL) as their Elliott State Research Forest (ESRF) project advisor and will be speaking on her behalf when she is not present. Meliah Masiba will remain as the project team lead. Vicki shared that Geoff and Meliah will partner to represent the Agency to allow her additional time to tend to other areas. She stated she will join the AC meetings, as available. Vicki then reviewed the project timeline with the group, and shared that she anticipates the Committee's work to be completed in November, ahead of the December 8 State Land Board (Land Board) meeting.

### **Reflections from Land Board Offices on Progress to Date & Next Steps Going Forward**

On behalf of the Oregon Secretary of State, Cameron Smith thanked members of the Advisory Committee for their continued commitment and energy dedicated to this effort. He thanked DSL, OSU, and Oregon Consensus for their leadership, facilitation, and staff work. He also welcomed OSU College of Forestry's new Dean, Tom DeLuca. Cameron noted the ESRF AC process has a historic and unique opportunity to bring this chapter of the Elliott history to a close, and drive forward with momentum. The Secretary of State has a desire to see a proposal by December of this year, and does not support extending beyond. He then reviewed key components the Secretary would like to see emphasized in a plan brought forth before the Land Board, which included a research forest that: honors the working forest landscape that supports local economies; acknowledges the legacy and future of forestry is part of Oregon's natural resources system; is financially self-sustaining; and is managed for broad Oregon values both for the economy and ecosystem. He then encouraged the group to work over the months ahead to bring this AC work to a close and stated the status quo is not a tenable option.

Oregon State Treasurer Land Board Assistant, Dmitri Palmateer, shared the Treasurer's thoughts to date regarding the Elliott. Dmitri shared that the Treasurer looks forward to seeing a plan in December for a research forest. Dmitri acknowledged that there are remaining questions and finer points yet to be resolved by the group, but shared the sooner the group can come to agreement on a research design and governance, the quicker the AC and others will be able to address conversations about de-coupling and financing. Outcomes the Treasurer's Office is interested in seeing in an ESRF research forest include working forest values, habitat conservation, a modern research agenda relevant to how our forests operate, self-sustainability, a more formal recreational asset for Oregonians, and a solution that moves the State beyond the past history on this issue. Dmitri indicated that while a Plan B may also achieve some of those outcomes, there is no Plan B for a research forest, and that the Treasurer believes in the concept and vision of an OSU Elliott State Research Forest. He believes there is potential the research can add value to industry; important benefits to threatened and endangered species on the coast; and OSU is a public entity with a track record of providing access for recreation. He urged the AC members continue to not let the 'perfect be the enemy of the good' and shared his feeling that the group is very close to having something significant for the State of Oregon. Dmitri then urged the AC to do a final push to find room for compromise and answer the remaining unresolved questions. He recognized that finer points of de-coupling may not be in place by December, but that there needs to be an outline of a

comprehensive structure with a sense of yes or no from the AC in front of the Land Board by the end of the year.

On behalf of Governor Brown, Jason Miner thanked members of the Advisory Committee. He noted that the Elliott remains a priority for the Governor and it has been a defining project for her tenure in office. He stated the issues around the Elliott have historically been complex and acknowledged the Committee has strived to address diverse perspectives regarding the Elliott's past, and potential future as a research forest. He shared the Governor is encouraged by the Committee's efforts and remains inspired about the potential of an experimental research forest. He stated that an overall experimental and research forest concept resonates with her, especially with a focus on how the Elliott will contribute to carbon sequestration and climate change adaptation and knowledge. In addition to an outcome of a climate friendly forest, he shared the Governor is also interested in the outcomes the Elliott can contribute to education and tribal interests. Jason shared he hasn't spoken specifically about the timeline with the Governor, but believes she is committed to the December Land Board meeting where there will be an approach that addresses how a research forest advances the stated public values. Furthermore, he suspects the Governor will want to see how a research forest advances objectives articulated in her executive order on climate and climate change (*EO 20-04*), recognizing that this EO provides overarching policy guidance, but not necessarily a specific filter or test for how a plan for the Elliott would be judged. He anticipates the Governor's comments at the December Land Board meeting will reflect the priority of the concepts that she advanced in EO 20-04.

With that, the AC asked questions and offered comments related to what the AC expects the proposal structure to look like; a desire to know any red flags about the approach from the Land Board members prior to December; the relationship of the Governor's executive order on climate and climate change to the Elliott; and the Land Board's desired components of a research forest.

### **OSU Research Platform Presentation**

#### *Overview of Elliott State Research Forest Vision and Opportunity*

Tom DeLuca, Dean of OSU's College of Forestry, provided a broad overview of the College of Forestry's vision and thoughts on potential opportunities for an Elliott State Research Forest. Dean DeLuca reiterated that he is excited to have joined OSU and believed that the College and its network of partners are the right group to move the project forward. Dean DeLuca shared he is happy that DSL has been able to add complementary expertise to its Elliott team given the complexity of the project. He then asked AC members to take a moment to acknowledge the history of the tribes that lived in the various areas where AC members are located. Dean DeLuca recognized that he is calling into the meeting from Corvallis, located in the traditional homelands of the Kalupuya, who following the Willamette Valley Treaty of 1855, were forcibly removed to reservations in Western Oregon. Living descendants of these people are part of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community of Oregon and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians. Following this, Dean DeLuca spoke to the importance of forestry in meeting increasing demands

for timber, fiber and other forest resources. He addressed that forestry will need to do better to continue to meet demands while sustainably managing these renewable resources, providing ecosystem goods and services for all. He then reviewed the following topics with Committee members: why OSU is committed and interested in managing the Elliott State Forest as a research forest; OSU's objectives; review of the research framework; and other related work underway. Key points included, but not limited to, the following:

#### *Why the Elliott?*

- The Elliott is a location of beauty, diversity and productivity. It is a culturally important place for Indigenous peoples and historically an important resource base.
- More recently, the Elliott as a state forest provided for rural economies, for the State, and for Oregon schools, but when past practices ultimately brought timber management to a halt, the potential for conveyance to the University for use as a research forest came into focus.

#### *Why an Elliott State Research Forest?*

- ESRF has immense capacity to provide the values needed to sustain ecosystems and economies in Oregon and beyond.
- Carefully designed and conducted research and scientific inquiry in a dedicated area at scale on the ESRF can inform the conservation and management decisions of the future.
- Forestry and forestry research have an important role and responsibility in mitigating climate change and protecting and aiding in recovery of imperiled species.
- The ESRF will help stabilize and revitalize communities.
- The ESRF will protect and promote mature and old-growth trees while intentionally growing large diameter trees for harvest
- This research could expand and diversify value-added commodity options for Oregon's economy while examining how it affects biodiversity relative to other forest management approaches.

#### *Oregon State University Objective*

- With science informed practice, tens of millions of acres of managed Pacific NorthWest forests could provide for habitat and diversity.
- Research will move beyond protecting species, towards rehabilitating and delisting imperiled species.
- The size, location, and multiple values that define the ESRF are a singular opportunity to study, demonstrate, and inform how to sustainably manage forests for social, ecological, and economic values.
- Transforming the Elliott State Forest to an ESRF requires forethought and adherence to a platform that will support research initiatives today and into the future.
- This research necessitates controls and replication that define the rigorous expectations for thoughtful science.

### *The Research Framework*

- The TRIAD platform serves as a starting point for research.
- TRIAD integrates plantations, reserves and alternative approaches to forestry at the landscape scale, affording opportunities to test new approaches to forest management that meet human fiber needs with minimal impact to the environment.

Following this, Dean DeLuca introduced Dr. Anthony S. Davis, Executive Associate Dean at OSU's College of Forestry. Dr. Davis reaffirmed that public values (public ownership and access; work forest values; workforce and local economic benefit; conversation values; and tribal engagement) remain at the forefront of an OSU research forest concept. He acknowledged a research platform, the focus of today's meeting, is the foundational piece of a comprehensive plan to manage the ESRF in a way that honors these values and stated it is an integral piece that must be established in order to fully develop other components, such as governance, recreation, and educational partnerships.

### *Research Platform Presentation*

Dr. Katy Kavanagh, OSU College of Forestry Associate Dean of Research, reviewed OSU's research framework for the Elliott (*See PPT presentations for additional details*) with Committee members. Presentation topics included a review of the overarching research theme; goal of OSU's research platform; research treatments; TRIAD design concepts; adaptive management approach to research design and implementation; outcomes related to species recovery; and general guiding principles for research. Comments and questions from Committee members were related to the timing of the power analysis; distribution of early seral and early complex seral habitat; and whether there was an opportunity to research fragmentation. Generally, Advisory Committee members appreciated the level of work and detail included in the presentation. Many noted the research platform is moving in the right direction. Others touched on the remaining questions and additional clarification needed from the University e.g. roads, slopes, and riparian treatments.

### Additional Components

The following additional updates were with Committee members:

- *Habitat Conservation Plan:* Troy Rahmig (ICF) provided a brief HCP update to the group. ICF has been tracking the evolving progress of the research platform. The HCP will contain the research framework and research planned for the forest. Additionally, the HCP will consider the net effects on species over time which are based on assumptions about the timing and type of harvest, and the potential for management actions to improve habitat as an assumption in the effects analysis. Once the details of the research design are finalized, ICF will be able to incorporate the design into draft HCP language. Troy noted he doesn't anticipate any surprises and has kept the federal partners briefed as elements are evolving. He shared that generally the conversation values that you would expect to see in an HCP are built within the project itself. As a result, Troy does not expect a lot of new constraints, or

additional measures that would make the research forest less viable. It is expected the HCP will formalize many of the aspects Committee members have already seen.

- *Decoupling*: discussions are underway about timing and structure for decoupling. Discussions have begun with some potential funders and grantee organizations interested in financing parts of a research forest, or expertise they could offer in thinking about creative ways to approach decoupling. Conversations will resume in Fall 2020 when there is consensus regarding a conceptual design and momentum towards a solution.
- *DSL Public Engagement*: DSL shared their thinking regarding upcoming public engagement opportunities with the Committee. They noted the Agency has been informing the public throughout the exploration of a potential research forest and will begin shifting their engagement efforts to providing opportunities for meaningful input and feedback. An engagement plan will be finalized by September, and the Agency will widely promote public engagement opportunities in October and November that are accessible to all. Furthermore, DSL and OSU--together and individually--will continue to provide multiple opportunities for ways to learn about plan elements and provide input prior to the December Land Board meeting. The value of the input will be clearly demonstrated throughout the process and DSL will communicate how that input will be used and be reflected in the concept.
- *Governance*: A small working group has met twice to discuss governance. The group will continue to meet and will engage the AC as it moves forward. Key pieces of information are carbon and OSU will need to do additional internal work to determine what is feasible. Additional details will be forthcoming.
- *Science Advisory Panel and other committee work*: the Science Advisory Panel is excited about the vision and they see opportunities to expand on the social science aspects of the research. The Science Advisory Panel is tasked with ensuring OSU is looking at aspects that could jeopardize the scientific integrity or capacity of the project, as well as to advise Dean DeLuca in capturing the scientific potential of a research forest. The Science Advisory Panel is not an oversight body, but rather an advisory panel and meant to provide meaningful peer-to-peer feedback.

## **Next Steps**

Peter thanked Advisory Committee members for their participation. He then invited members to provide any final reflections. One committee member shared she was encouraged by OSU's vision and commitment to an Elliott State Research Forest. She shared an ESRF could be an opportunity to leave a legacy and encouraged AC members to see this broader opportunity for Oregon.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.