



## Federal Forest Working Group

### Work Plan

July 2016 – June 2017

Final Draft 7/12/2016

This work plan and related tasks are derived from the previously adopted *FFWG Purpose and Vision statement (see below)* as well as on-going FFWG efforts, known challenges, and current / emerging opportunities. Since 2008, the purpose of the FFWG (formerly the Federal Forest Advisory Committee Implementation Working Group) has been to pursue implementation of recommendations on how to accomplish improved management of federal public forest lands in partnership with the State, as initially set forth in the Oregon Board of Forestry's report, "[Achieving Oregon's Vision for Federal Forestlands](#)", [January 2009 \(crafted as part of a process convened by then Governor Kulongoski's office\)](#). Beginning in 2013, the Oregon Legislature and Executive Branch have advanced state investments aimed at achieving economic, social, and ecological outcomes derived from improved, collaboratively-based federal forest management. This programmatic work on federal forest health has been led by the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), and as of the 2015-17 biennium, the intent of Oregon's Legislature and Executive Branch has focused on expanding the State's efforts beyond the drier, fire-prone federally-managed forests to more of a statewide approach.

The level of effort and desired outcomes related to each work plan item below requires further discussion and refinement with the FFWG. Work plan items may be implemented in a variety of ways – directly by the FFWG, creation of FFWG subcommittees or task force, through Federal Forest Restoration Program contracting for assistance, or with the help of partners (for example OSU Forestry Extension, USFS Pacific NW Research Station, University of Oregon Ecosystem Workforce Program, Oregon Solutions, etc.).

Considerations that frame the crafting of this work plan and further discussions include:

- Prioritize FFWG work where it can be value-added vs. where other entities/working groups are already taking the lead.
- Identify how federal forest issues would move forward if FFWG is *not* the lead and provide opportunities for stakeholders to potentially link to these other fora for engagement.
- As the FFWG tackles new issues, concurrently determine if initially forming a related work group, subcommittee or similar structure will better support FFWG's work on the issue going forward.

The overall work plan approach intends that the FFWG would continue to serve as a **neutral, transparent forum** for engagement by diverse interests to advance the Oregon federal forest partnership and the Oregon model<sup>1</sup> for increasing the pace, scale and quality of forest management as outlined in the *FFWG Purpose and Vision Statement*.

<sup>1</sup> The Oregon model refers to a coordinated partnership effort to advance collaboratively driven, landscape-scale, active restoration of federally managed public forest lands through efforts including place-based forest collaboratives, the state's Federal Forest Restoration Program and coordination with federal programs including the Eastside Accelerated Restoration Strategy, Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP), Good Neighbor Authority and the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy.

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**Specific FFWG work plan elements for 2016-2017:**

**1. Advise the prioritization and implementation of the Oregon federal forest health partnership model. Specifically:**

- i. Advance the State’s Federal Forest Restoration Program (FFRP), including:
  - a. Institutional commitment within ODF and linkages to other agencies and partners;
  - b. Budget-related development at the state and federal levels.
  - c. Feedback regarding any initiatives coming out of ODF’s Large Fire Cost Work Group or other fora.
- ii. Track and document economic, ecological, and social performance indicators relevant to federal public forest management in Oregon, including the “Federal Forest Health Dashboard”.
- iii. Implementation of the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA)—primary focus for 2016 includes:
  - Provide discussion and input concerning the approach(es) to GNA roll-out, the role and degree of intersection with local collaborative groups and projects, and/or near-term project opportunities.
  - Identify strategic opportunities where GNA intersects with the FFWG Purpose and Vision.
  - Support workshops or other outreach with field-level agency staff and stakeholders to better understand and creatively implement GNA with partners.
- iv. Identify opportunities to advance FFRP implementation in western Oregon, including encouraging the State to establish a GNA agreement with BLM.

**2. Provide recommendations to the USFS and the State regarding federal initiatives, programs, and efforts connected to achieving the FFWG’s Purpose and Vision:**

- i. Planning and Implementation Efficiencies (NEPA and beyond)
  - a. Adaptive Innovation—Learning from and leveraging project lessons to date in Oregon and beyond re. implementation of relatively recent / innovative approaches to increased pace and scale – (e.g. Malheur National Forest 10-year stewardship contract; A-to-Z project; Lower Joseph project; West Bend project; East Face project; Lakeview Stewardship Unit projects; Kahler project; etc.).

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- b. Encourage pilot efforts or testing of different approaches to planning and implementation under current legal authorities that achieve potential efficiencies or other benefits.
  - ii. Western forests Initiative / Western Governors Association (WGA) Gov. Bullock’s Forest Initiative—includes vetting and input on policy concepts and coordination with the Oregon Board of Forestry Federal Forests Subcommittee.

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**3. Enhance the effectiveness of collaborative approaches to federal forest management.**

- i. Develop and implement a more focused strategy to increase the effectiveness, viability and sustainability of Oregon’s community-based forest collaborative groups and related work, including:
  - a. Organize and engage a summit / gathering of the private philanthropic community to develop and enhance sustained approaches to funding collaborative efforts and local collaborative groups tied to federal public land management and rural community health (with State and Federal leadership in convening).
  - b. Formalize a structure for appropriate capacity and technical support.
  - c. Best practice considerations for broad stakeholder engagement in forest collaboration efforts (e.g., provide feedback regarding what’s working well for collaborative groups in terms of facilitation, training, workshops, web-based resources, etc.).
- ii. Identify and address impediments to attaining collaborative outcomes and enhancement of pace and scale in achieving forest health objectives, as well as ways to strengthen and broaden zones of agreement in collaborative groups including:
  - a. Potential WGA Initiative connections and congressional efforts / policy.
  - b. USFS budgeting, performance measures and/or other administrative policies.
  - c. Public understanding / education.
- iii. Consider a proposed design and provide input to a digital platform (web portal) that can serve as a centralized communications hub, or exchange, tied to the Oregon model for forest health (providing connectivity, information and data exchange opportunities for the current / future forest stakeholders, collaborative participants, interested parties, researchers and students).

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**4. Track and advance timely completion of all aspects of forest restoration**

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i. Identify policy and/or administrative implementation barriers to the increased use of prescribed and/or natural fire in completing fuel reduction treatments and advancing forest resilience. This includes coordinating with ongoing efforts related to Oregon's Smoke Management Plan and associated connections to public health, air quality (regulations and planning), carbon emissions, and renewable energy / woody biomass. It requires engagement of agencies and stakeholders connected to these issues in FFWG discussions.

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ii. Identify and document the backlog of projects, outcomes (including potential jobs), and needed funding for NEPA-approved non-timber removal management actions, including but not limited to: prescribed fire, aspen restoration, meadow enhancement, invasive weed work, road maintenance and decommissioning, fish passage improvements, and other riparian and terrestrial habitat improvements.

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***FFWG Purpose and Vision Statement***  
***(working draft with revisions reflecting April 2016 FFWG discussion)***

~~“The FFWG is an advocate for collaborative approaches to complex public land management issues to resolve conflict and identify innovative solutions. We promote community well-being, economic vitality, and improved ecological resilience by supporting place-based forest collaborative groups to advance active landscape-scale restoration of federal forest lands throughout Oregon.”~~

The FFWG is an advocate for community based collaborative approaches to complex public land management issues to resolve conflict and identify innovative solutions. We strive to contribute to (rural) community well-being, economic vitality, and improved ecological resilience by advancing active landscape-scale restoration of federal forest lands throughout Oregon.

The purposes of the FFWG include:

- Advance collaboratively driven landscape-scale, active restoration of federal forest lands throughout Oregon;
- Foster and expand the use of collaborative problem solving at the community level;
- Enable research and development into what works and what doesn't in community based collaborative processes;
- Identify and remove policy and financial barriers; and
- Promote innovative solutions to restoration of forest and watershed health.

We will:

- Provide a forum for community based dialogue across collaborative groups and involving diverse stakeholders including federal and state agencies, counties, tribes, and interest groups to raise and solve barriers to accelerated restoration on federal lands (Forest Service and BLM);
- Support and contribute to maintaining and growing our innovative Federal-State Partnership that demonstrates new governance structures and ways of doing business together;
- Discuss and foster implementation of new and emerging governance structures that provide for meaningful involvement of community and collaborative leadership, including identifying the resources and conditions necessary to implement these collaborative structures;
- Articulate the need for a consistent supply of timber offered through restoration and forest management that is collaboratively supported; and,
- Work together to identify and secure increased, consistent, and/or diverse funding of collaborative approaches and implementation of landscape scale restoration projects.

These activities will restore forests, help sustain communities by creating jobs and maintaining forest-sector infrastructure, and enhance Oregon’s energy independence.”

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**2016 FFWG Work Session Dates, Times and Locations\*  
And Potential Work Session Topics**

**Working Draft  
6/25/16**

**Thursday, Sept 15** 1-4 p.m. **Possible eastside location.**  
Updates: \* FFH 2017-19 Agency requested budget.  
\* FFH implementation: grants, SFIP & GNA  
\* Eastside Restoration Strategy (Bill Aney)

Work session: \* Placeholders:  
- FFWG work plan review, adopt.  
- Lessons learned – eastside collaboration, pace and scale to date.  
- Philanthropic funding opportunities for forest collaboration  
and local forest collaborative groups

**Thursday, Nov 3** 1-4 p.m. **Portland. (or back again to Eugene?)**  
Updates: \* FFH 2017-19 Agency requested budget.  
\* FFH implementation: grants, SFIP & GNA  
\* Eastside Restoration Strategy (Bill Aney)

Work session: \* Placeholders:  
- Westside FFH program expansion discussion;  
- Good Neighbor Authority outcomes, next steps

**Thursday, Dec 15** 1-4 p.m. **Portland.**  
Updates: \* FFH 2017-19 *Governor's Recommended Budget.*  
\* FFH implementation: grants, SFIP & GNA  
\* Eastside Restoration Strategy (Bill Aney)

Work session: To be determined

**2017 work session dates and locations to be determined:**

January 2017  
March 2017  
May 2017

## For On-going Reference

### The 5 Strategic Recommendations for State and Local Solutions Advanced by the Oregon Board of Forestry

From "[Achieving Oregon's Vision for Federal Forestlands](#)", Report from the Federal Forest Advisory Committee and the Oregon Board of Forestry, January 2009.

"The overall strategy for state and local solutions is to work with federal agencies to take action to improve forest health. Symptoms of declining forest health (e.g., uncharacteristic wildfire, altered water quality and quantity, degraded fish and wildlife habitat, and reduced biodiversity and ecosystem resiliency) are of immediate importance. However, long-term success will require solving related problems (e.g., timber harvest below sustainable levels, decreased infrastructure, continued conflict over the desired amount of older forests, lack of trust, and inadequate policy coordination). This document makes five strategic recommendations dedicated to solving problems at the state and local levels. Each recommendation identifies the action items that will be necessary for successful implementation. The recommendations are as follows:

1. The Governor and the State Legislature should create a Federal Forestland Liaison Program to support federal agency and local community efforts to improve forest health on federal forestlands.
2. The Governor and the State Legislature should assist federal agencies in providing administrative, financial, and technical resources to local governments and collaborative partnerships to build trust and help identify scientifically informed and socially acceptable forest management projects to improve forest health.
3. Local collaborative groups in cooperation with the federal agencies should first assess forest health conditions and then plan projects at the landscape scale to address high priority needs.
4. Collaborative groups should define and delineate the amount of older forest that should be conserved and re-established to maintain ecological sustainability and resiliency as part of their landscape assessment.
5. Leaders from state and federal agencies, county and tribal governments, and private forestland owners should meet on a regular basis to discuss and coordinate policies that affect forest health issues and address the recommendations in this report.

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**For Reference.**

**Oregon Board of Forestry Work Plan 2/2016.  
Issue/Topic: Federal Forests**

**Background:**

Federal agencies manage 60% of Oregon's forestland on behalf of the public. While different ecological dynamics are drivers in Oregon's diverse forests, an increase in forest restoration statewide will provide important ecological, economic, and social benefits for Oregonians. In particular, it will also have positive impacts for rural communities. Collaborative efforts have successfully built trust across diverse stakeholder groups and reduced interest-based litigation. Where collaboratives have been effective, additional federal and state resources are broadening the base and pipeline of active management. As collaboration has become mainstream in Oregon, concerns have been voiced by some citizens and stakeholders. Some view collaboration, and efforts to reform Federal policies governing forest management, as a two pronged strategy leading to unregulated timber harvest. Other constituents perceive collaboration as a Trojan Horse which will ultimately reduce access, use and benefit by local communities.

In 2009, the Board adopted Achieving Oregon's Vision for Federal Forestlands, a report produced by the Federal Forest Advisory Committee (FFAC). Since, the Governor's Natural Resource Office has convened the Federal Forest Working Group (FFWG) to implement actions identified within the State's purview in the 2009 Report. The FFWG initially identified and scoped out what became the ODF Federal Forest Health Program (FFH) funded in both the 2013-2015 and 2015-2017 biennia by the State Legislature.

**Purpose:**

The intent of this work plan is to amplify the "Oregon Model", a functional partnership among local forest collaboratives, the State, and the Federal agencies to accelerate the restoration of forests and watersheds managed by the US Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management. To date, this Model has been successful at a place-based scale. The deliverables in this work plan are intended to qualify and quantify forest restoration statewide, and strengthen the foundation for success. Through success, the Oregon Model can be an example for other western States.

**Scope:**

The scope for this work plan includes all federal forestland statewide, including lands managed by the US Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

**Deliverables:**

- 1) Quantify opportunities for restoration within existing land management plan constructs
  - a. Deliverable A: Map of active restoration opportunities for each national forest based on current land designations (e.g. Wilderness, etc.) and administrative policies (IRA's, RHCA's, etc.)
  - b. Deliverable B: Acres (exhibited in a table) of forest acreage and percentage that is allocated or designated into different management opportunity categories
- 2) Revisit Achieving Oregon's Vision for Federal Forestlands (2009 report from the Federal Forest Advisory Committee) and the work of the Federal Forest Working Group to determine any next steps needed to amplify the Oregon Model
  - a. Deliverable: to be determined
- 3) Engage in media outreach/campaign

a. Deliverable: Coordinated media outreach strategy regarding the opportunities for forest restoration and the successes to date of the Oregon Model

**Timeframe with Milestones**

- Spring 2016 – Presentation of maps and table to Board – Spring 2016
- Spring-Summer 2016 – Board agenda topics regarding status of collaboration
- Fall/Winter 2016 – Board adoption of outreach strategy

**Resources required**

- ODF Staff time to prepare maps and tables
- Time on Board agenda
- Otherwise, to be determined.

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