

Board of Forestry Testimony
Submitted by Scott Gray representing Stimson Lumber Company
March 6, 2019

The Oregon Department of Forestry has pointed out that the current Forest Management Plan (FMP) does not adequately address larger restoration needs of Swiss Needle Cast (SNC) and mature alder stands in the state forests. I commend them for bringing light to this subject and the need for inclusion in the new FMP. These SNC and mature alder stands total 100,000 acres or more and without investment, will not be areas of the forest for future generations to use and enjoy. These stands are not growing and trees that are not growing, are not sequestering carbon. In fact, they may very well be releasing more carbon than they sequester as they degrade. I am very familiar with these types of restoration efforts on our company lands and have a suggested approach that I want to share with you today.

The first step would be to form a working group made up of ODF District Personnel (operational and reforestation foresters) to focus on the restoration of Swiss Needle Cast and mature alder stands. The charge of this group would be to develop an action plan that would be part of the new FMP. As this group begins the work, they should identify the areas in each District that needs to be treated. This is a very fundamental step in quantifying the size of the issue and will aid in important next steps as a plan is developed. As with any action plan there is an associated budget to accomplish it.

Second, as stands are identified, they should be categorized in a financial matrix by District as follows:

- Stands if converted would create a loss (revenue minus logging costs). Use best estimates of revenue and logging costs to determine the loss on each unit you then can roll these similar stands up by District and quantify a total loss by District.
- Stands if converted would be nearly breakeven or create a small loss. Using the same logic, the loss in these stands can be rolled up by District and quantify a total loss.
- Stands if converted would create a profit. During the market conditions of 2018 many of these stands could have created a profit. These stands utilizing the same logic can be rolled up by District which would be an offset to others which create losses.
- After each District has completed their work, a planning action and budget for all six Districts combined can be compiled. The whole effort will now have a total cost.

Third, there is expertise within the Industry (with similar restoration projects) to help ODF with cost estimates, operational or reforestation challenges. Further, ODF may consider adding County representatives to this working group for visibility and endorsement of this action.

A process like this needs to happen to identify the actions needed, timeline and budget. Before any incremental funding is requested by ODF, this process must be completed.

These underproductive stands are not the inheritance we should leave future generations. A plan should be made as part of the new FMP to convert these stands to vigorously growing, conifer stands for future generations to have for timber production, recreation, wildlife, carbon sinks and more. To me, this is not so much an issue about making money, conservation or both today, but is a question of legacy. What shall we leave future generations?

Respectfully submitted by Scott Gray