

Oregon Department of Forestry
Division/Program Name Strategic Initiatives – 2020-2021

Division/Program: Partnership & Planning

Strategic Initiative Summary Matrix

Initiative	Status
Implementing Shared Stewardship <i>Policy Option Package</i>	Initiating / Continuing
Optimizing Carbon Sequestration in Oregon’s Forests <i>Policy Option Package</i>	Initiating / Continuing
Developing a Framework for Ecosystem Services	Continuing
Revising the Forestry Program for Oregon	Initiating

The Partnership & Planning program proposes four initiatives for discussion with the agency Executive Team. The Division/Program related Board work plan is described below in the context of these initiatives.

Strategic Initiative: Implementing Shared Stewardship

Background/Context – In 2013, the state legislature initiated Oregon’s Federal Forest Restoration (FFR) Program. In 2016, Governor Brown signed Oregon’s Master Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) Agreement. To date, ODF has GNA agreements in place to implement \$9 million of projects, including 18 timber sales totaling 30 million board feet. The actualization of GNA has overwhelmed existing ODF staff capacity authorized in the FFR program budget.

Purpose/Relevance – The agency initiative proposed during the development of ODFs Agency Request Budget for the 2019-2021 biennium recognized the need to increase capacity to implement work through GNA. Southern Oregon Area has already permanently borrowed two positions from Private Forests to staff two GNA Forester positions. With Shared Stewardship and recommendations expected from the Governor’s Council on Wildfire Response both the opportunities and expectations for ODF to staff up significantly to implement projects across both public and private lands will grow exponentially over the 2021-2023 biennium.

It will take a combination of these components to be successful and address the initiative holistically.

I. Component A: Staff capacity in the field to implement and grow GNA

Description

In response to a growing portfolio of GNA project work, Southern Oregon Area and Eastern Oregon Area staff conducted a capacity needs assessment to identify short-to-mid-term capacity

needs. In total, this work at the local level has identified the need for an additional 19.5 FTE by September 2021 based on current projects authorized under GNA agreements and forecasted work during that timeline. The additional capacity is a mix of NRS1 and NRS 2 positions with the expectation that by June 2023, the positions will be 100% funded with federal funds from GNA projects. In addition, this assessment identified the need for a minimum of 10 FTE-equivalents of seasonal staff capacity (FMT classification).

To date, FFR budget (state general fund) has been used to provide gap funding necessary to hire additional full-time staff to span the timeframe when project revenue from timber sales is realized (1-2 year timeframe from sale date). With no additions to the FFR budget, the additional staff capacity will need to be phased in through 2022 depending on the amount of general fund available to provide gap funds. Alternatively, this POP could consider an additional one-time investment of general fund for 2021-2023 to establish all or some portion of the positions and transition funding to 100% federal by the end of the 2021-2023 biennium.

Estimated budget authority:

- \$3 million, federal funds (FF) for 19.5 FTE field-based positions

II. Component B: Additional capacity within FFR to expand geographic and programmatic scope

Description

As a result of House Bill 4118, the FFR program piloted contracting environmental analysis necessary to authorize federal land management projects. In the 2017-2019 biennium, ODF funded and completed three project documentations to successfully authorize projects using Categorical Exclusions to the National Environmental Policy Act. As program revenue from GNA timber sales comes due, and with additional FFR investments of state funds, this new component of FFR work will grow in scope and scale. FFR will need additional capacity to take on this highly technical work statewide. Discussions with the FFR team and District Foresters have resulted in the call to centralize this specific role in Salem, likely an NRS3 position.

In addition, GNA opportunities on the west side, including existing work on the southern end of the Willamette National Forest, will necessitate an additional FFR Coordinator position (NRS3) based in the field (likely NWOA) to provide service to the Willamette NF and the Mt Hood NF. The proposal is to fund these staff positions with general fund. Lastly, with the influx of federal funds and reimbursements necessary to GNA projects, the Federal Initiatives Unit needs an additional 0.5 FTE position (FA2). The funding for this position would be federal indirect.

Estimated budget authority:

- \$400,000 general fund (GF) for 2.0 FTE NRS3 positions
- \$100,000 federal funds (FF) authorization, 0.5 FTE Fiscal Analyst position

PROJECTED BOARD WORK PLAN ITEMS

- The budget prioritization and approval process already described in the Administrative Services Division workplan.
- Continued engagement with the Board's Federal Forest Subcommittee and Board, as needed.

Strategic Initiative: Optimizing Carbon Storage in Oregon's Forests

Background/Context – In the 2016 legislative session, the legislature provided funding to the Office of Carbon Policy to initiate an assessment of carbon sequestration in Oregon's forest and wood products. This funding was passed to ODF and Partnership & Planning (P&P), which contracted with the USFS Pacific Northwest Research Station to deliver an estimate of carbon storage and flux in Oregon's forests, based on inventory plots from the Forest Inventory Assessment. In parallel, P&P initiated and prioritized internal funding to contract a corollary project to estimate carbon storage and flux in wood products manufactured in the state. This project is one component of an increased focus on climate policy across the Executive Branch, including multiple interagency initiatives related to mitigation and adaptation planning.

Purpose/Relevance – The first two assessments provide a snapshot of carbon storage and flux under current management practices and utilization approaches. P&P staff have been coordinating with colleagues in California, Washington and British Columbia to scope a methodology to quantify carbon storage and flux under various management and utilization scenarios different than the status quo. In addition, P&P is currently employing one limited duration position to lead ODFs engagement in interagency initiatives and build agency capacity relating to climate mitigation and adaptation opportunities.

It will take a combination of these components to be successful and address the initiative holistically.

I. Component A: Modeling Future Carbon Storage Under Different Scenarios

Description

This POP will seek funding to complete the third study, projecting carbon storage under different forest management and utilization studies.

Estimated budget authority:

- \$250,000 general fund (GF), no position authority

II. Component B: Increasing ODF Capacity to Engage on Carbon Mitigation and Adaptation

Description

With increased focus on the topic from the Governor's Office, Executive Branch agencies and the Board of Forestry, this POP seeks to add dedicated capacity to P&P regarding climate policy. This is proposed for one additional permanent NRS4 position.

Estimated budget authority:

- \$250,000 general fund (GF), one NRS4 position (Salem)

PROJECTED BOARD WORK PLAN ITEMS

- The budget prioritization and approval process already described in the Administrative Services Division workplan.
- The P&P Program will present results of the modeling scenarios and mitigation and adaptation plans to the Board.

Strategic Initiative: Developing a Framework for Ecosystem Services

Background/Context – In 2017, the Board identified Ecosystem Services as an Emerging Issue. P & P staff worked with the State Forester and experts at Oregon State University (OSU) to bring two agenda items to the Board regarding the valuation of ecosystem services in policy making. Board discussion and interest centered around continuing to explore the potential development of a framework that the Board could use to value ecosystem services in future policy discussions.

Purpose/Relevance – This initiative is relevant to concurrent discussions with the Board regarding revising the Forestry Program for Oregon, and in particular, decision frameworks that the current Board wants to include relative to its work going forward.

It will take a combination of these components to be successful and address the initiative holistically.

I. Component A: Development of a framework for valuing ecosystem services

Description

At this point, this is a conceptual placeholder for consideration with the Executive Team and the Board. If chosen to include as strategic initiative during 2020-2021, P & P staff would work with OSU to develop a workplan specific to the outcome of establishing a framework for ecosystem services. This work may fold into a more general Board workplan to revise the Forestry Program for Oregon. It is not expected that additional staff capacity nor budget would be necessary.

PROJECTED BOARD WORK PLAN ITEMS

- *To be developed in conjunction with OSU*

Strategic Initiative: Revising the Forestry Program for Oregon

Background/Context – The Forestry Program for Oregon (FPFO) serves as the strategic plan for the Board of Forestry. The FPFO was last updated in 2011 and is due for review and consideration for revision by the Board.

Purpose/Relevance – The State Forester and agency Executive Team have identified several values missing from the current FPFO and that are necessary to include to ensure alignment with the agency's values. In addition, throughout 2019, the Board has called for increased focus and attention on climate change as an urgent topic for the Board to elevate in its work.

I. Component A: Revision of the Forestry Program for Oregon

Description

This is a conceptual placeholder to be determined in conjunction with the Board at its October retreat. This initiative will be active if the Board chooses to initiate revision of the FPFO. If chosen to include as strategic initiative during 2020-2021, P & P staff would develop a workplan to revise the FPFO over a two-year timeframe. It is not expected that additional staff capacity nor budget would be necessary.

PROJECTED BOARD WORK PLAN ITEMS

- *To be developed in response to Board discussion at the October retreat*