



## Committee for Family Forestlands Meeting Summary for January 12, 2022



*Pursuant to public notice made by news release with statewide distribution, a meeting of the Committee for Family Forestlands [an advisory body to the Oregon Board of Forestry with authority established in Oregon Revised Statute 527.650] was convened on January 12, 2022, as a virtual online meeting. Meeting recordings constitute the official record.*

<b>CFF Committee members participating:</b>	<b>ODF Staff attending:</b>
Nick Hennemann, Interim FPA & Monitoring Deputy Chief	Mike Kroon, All Lands Deputy Chief
Wendy Gerlach, Citizen-At-Large (Voting)	Susan Muniz, Administrative Specialist
Kaola Swanson, Conservation Rep. (Voting)	Adam Meyer, ODF Legislative Liaison
Gary Jensen, Southern Oregon Landowner Rep. (Voting)	Greg Wagenblast, Civil Penalties Coordinator
Kate McMichael, Landowner-At-Large Rep. (Voting)	Josh Barnard, Forest Resources Chief
S. Mark Vroman, Industry rep (Voting) Hampton Family Forests	Kristin Whitney
Barrett Brown, NW Landowner Rep. (Voting)	
Maurizio Valerio, EO Landowner Rep. (Voting)	
Rick Zenn, OSWA Executive Administrator Ex-Officio	
Glenn Ahrens, OSU College of Forestry Ext. Ex-Officio	
Julie Woodward, OFRI Ex-Officio	
Amanda Astor, Forest Policy Manager AOL Ex-Officio	
<b>Members not in attendance:</b>	<b>Guests/Public:</b>
Janelle Geddes, USFS State & Private Forestry Ex-Officio	Cal Mukumoto, State Forester
	Jim Kelley, Board of Forestry Chair

**Chair Gerlach opened the meeting** and called for changes to the agenda. The committee agreed to shorten the lunch break for more discussion time. The agenda included: Forest Resources Division Update; Operator of the Year presentation; Legislative Update; Conversation with the State Forester & Board Chair; and discussion of the Committee’s work plan.

**Forest Resources Division Update** Nick Hennemann, interim deputy chief, prefaced his report noting that besides the Committee formally corresponding with the Board regarding their concerns, as secretary to the committee, he serves as the liaison to the State Forester and department staff. Staff can act on committee recommendations that align with the Board’s direction. Responding to a question about the Small Forestland Owners Office recommended in the Private Forest Accord he answered those details aren’t available yet. He said the ‘Office’ will likely be housed in the Forest Resources Division, All Lands Program. Staffing for that will depend on the funding and resources available. Hennemann reported that the Small Forestland Grant Program application window closes January 21. The applications will be scored January 24<sup>th</sup>. There have been 20 applicants to date. There is the potential of another round of grant solicitations in the spring or fall. He also shared that the recruitment and hiring processes at the Department were proceeding quickly. They have added new capacity in the Human Resources Program and the Division is proceeding with interviews for the NRS 3 and NRS4 vacancies and are planning interviews for the NRS2 and NRS1 open positions in the Division.

**Operator of the Year.** Greg Wagenblast introduced members to the Operator recognition program within the Department to promote sustainable and responsible forestry. He noted the authorities and levels of recognition: Operator of the Year for each of the three ODF Areas (NW, SW, EO); Merit Awards; and Letters of Commendation. He shared the process of nomination, criteria for selection and then introduced the winning operators with a brief narrative and video presentation. All Around Logging/Aaron Silbernagel won for NW Oregon; Plikat Logging/Wally Plikat for SW Oregon; and H Timber Contracting/Tony Hauth for the Eastern Oregon Area. Members appreciated that the Department recognizes the good forest management going on and suggested wider distribution would be beneficial to better public understanding of the work going on. Hennemann agreed that a great deal of good work goes unrecognized, and most operators regularly go above and beyond the intent of the FPA.

**Legislative Update.** Adam Meyer, legislative liaison, gave an update about legislative activity and issues ahead of the Department. He noted the potential funds coming into states from the federal infrastructure; the upcoming two-year budget cycle; many staffing changes at the agency and politically; and the impact of COVID on timelines and the economy. Issues specific to the Department include climate change impacts; SB 762 and the Wildfire Omnibus Bill and the Private Forest Accord and Habitat Conservation Plan. He reported that ODF has presented to the Natural Resources Ways and Means Sub-Committee and the House and Senate Wildfire Committees. Concepts will be dropped this week, hot topics include: a fix for SB 762; harvest taxes; fix for the Large Fire funding; Private Forest Accord recommendations; media access for disaster reporting and global warming bills. The agency is starting work on the 2023-25 biennium budget and corresponding policy option packages (POPs).

**Conversation with the State Forester and BOF Chair.** Chair Gerlach opened the conversation welcoming the State Forester, Cal Mukumoto and Board Chair Jim Kelly and each member took a moment to introduce themselves. Then Glenn Ahrens and Julie Woodward presented the demographics of who the family forestland owners are as far as ages, location, acreages, and contributions to the economy. Members had been invited to showcase some of the priority topics of concern to the Committee. (Seedling availability; interest in being more involved in the future Small Forestland Owner Office; and the need for outreach and technical support for small forestlands.) Chair Kelly noted the two-way street in the roles of the Board and Committees to listen and be ambassadors to the public. He noted that the Board is more of a policymaking body directing the Agency if budgets allow but in addition the Board can be a voice and an ear for landowners for advising to the Department. The Chair suggested that the Committee provide input into the POPs process to ensure there is funding and capacity to fulfill technical service needs and encouraged ideas on how to improve communication with them. He appreciated the Committee's recommendation process and how it shows respect to minority opinions and believed it should be a model to other advisory group processes. He then offered that Board member Ben Deumling, would act as liaison to the Board for the Committee and attend CFF meetings when his schedule allowed. He shared this could be done informally and through connecting with Ben directly.

The State Forester expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to listen to the member's remarks and concerns and expressed that the family forestland owners, residing on the lands over time and living the consequences of their choices are the best stewards of those lands. He emphasized that he recognizes the Department's role in meeting the needs of small forestland owners in managing their lands and asked for assistance defining what those needs are and what outcomes are necessary to meet those needs into the future. He was happy there would be an opportunity for the group to have a liaison to the Board, someone willing to attend their meetings and be a sounding board for them.

**Workplan Discussion.** Hennemann reiterated the committee’s desire to integrate their work plan schedule to best match when items of interest to family forestlands are to be brought before the board by department staff. He offered options for variations from what’s been done before, such as the forming work groups for issues, meeting independently, and reporting back to the committee. This would allow the committee to meet less often and/or adjust the meeting format to help facilitate its work. Gerlach noted that the conversation with the Board Chair and State Forester went a long way in helping to focus Committee intention. She further noted that, once priorities are set, it could be beneficial to allow for more work time rather than presentation time. Brown noted that the situation is likely to be an artifact of the COVID restrictions, as virtual meetings have been shortened timewise and face-to-face opportunities are limited. Jensen added that perhaps defining desired outcomes and group expectations could help better determine the course of action. Gerlach added that some of the material covered in staff updates could be shared via linked sites and documents as they come up. Woodward suggested a meeting be publicized and devoted to receiving public comment. Barnard reminded members of the Partnership for Forestry Education as a resource available to the public and Woodward noted there are a variety of organizations to serve landowner needs. Ahrens agreed and noted that especially with disaster response there has been a lack of on-the-ground capacity and programs become overwhelmed. He still maintained that OSU Extension is best suited to being a central broker for assistance but there have been limitations in the ability to respond because of COVID. The Chair tabled this discussion till the next meeting.