

MEETING SUMMARY

WESTERN OREGON STATE FORESTS HCP JOINT STEERING COMMITTEE AND SCOPING TEAM MEETING

Tuesday, May 27, 2025, 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

By Webinar and Teleconference Only

PARTICIPANTS

Steering Committee: Mike Wilson (ODF), Kessina Lee (USFWS), Bridget Moran (USFWS), Joe Zisa (USFWS), Jennifer Wigal (DEQ), Bernadette Graham Hudson (ODFW), Dan Edge (OSU)

Scoping Team: Lance Kruzic (NOAA Fisheries), Jeff Young (NOAA Fisheries), Rod Krahmer (ODFW), Josh Seeds (DEQ), Jiajia Lin (DEQ), Ryan Singleton (DSL), Nick Palazzotto (ODF), Erik Moberly (ODF), Corey Grinnell (ODF), Vanessa Petro (ODF)

Guests: Tim Holschbach (ODF)

Technical Consultants: David Zippin and Melissa Klungle (ICF)

Facilitation Team: Ellen Palmquist and Gillian Garber-Yonts (Kearns & West), Cindy Kolomechuk (ODF)

WELCOME AND AGENDA REVIEW

Ellen Palmquist, Kearns & West, reviewed the agenda which included: 1) Welcome and Agenda Review, 2) Agency Updates and Stakeholder Engagement Updates, 3) Process and Timeline Updates, 4) Update on Additional Proposed Covered Species, 5) Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Feedback from the Services, 6) Steering Committee (SC) Direction to Scoping Team (ST), 7) Approach Going Forward, Next Steps, and Summary

Mike Wilson, ODF, welcomed SC and ST members and thanked them for joining.

AGENCY UPDATES AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

SC and ST members introduced themselves and provided the following updates relevant to the Western Oregon HCP process:

- **NOAA Fisheries:** Lance Kruzic is the new Oregon Coast Branch Supervisor and Kate Wells, replacing Kim Kratz, is the new Regional Assistant Administrator. NOAA's staffing has been reduced by about 1/3 across the region.
- **OSU:** No updates.
- **USFWS:** There have been about 20 departures from a staff of 80 in the last three months. The Portland office is undergoing a restructure to accommodate the staff reduction. USFWS is short-staffed and requests that capacity be taken into consideration regarding timelines. The HCP is a priority for the Service. The Elliott HCP

was recently signed, which gives indicates that forestry HCPs have support from this administration.

- **DSL:** No updates
- **DEQ:** No updates.
- **ODFW:** The Land Resources Program Manager position is vacant with Joy Lovette acting as Interim Program Manager.
- **ODF:** Mike Wilson shared that Kate Skinner is the Interim State Forester and Tim Holschbach is the Interim State Deputy Supervisor. ODF has completed modeling for harvest scenarios under the FMP for the Board of Forestry's (BOF) consideration. He shared that the 6/5 BOF meeting will include a facilitation discussion with the Forest Trust Lands Advisory Committee (FTLAC) on modeling outcomes. ODF will have more direction from the BOF in September and feedback will be used to build out the 2026 Implementation Plan (IP).

PROCESS AND TIMELINE UPDATES

Lance Kruzic, NOAA Fisheries, shared the new HCP milestone chart. He noted that ODF is working to address HCP comments provided by the Services. NOAA Fisheries has committed to completing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process by early summer 2026.

Mike Wilson shared appreciation for the Services' work on the timeline and added that ODF will be working to address HCP comments over the next several months.

UPDATE ON ADDITIONAL PROPOSED COVERED SPECIES

Vanessa Petro, ODF, shared that ODF was considering adding the following species to the HCP in early 2025.

- Western ridged mussel
- Western torrent salamander
- Northwest pond turtle

ODF is planning to move forward with covering the Northwest pond turtle because the species is further along in the Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing process. She added that ODF is expecting the final listing for the Northwest pond turtle may come out in fall 2025. ODF is not planning to cover the Western ridged mussel or the Western torrent salamander at this time.

Vanessa shared that ODF worked on a roadmap to identify any language in the HCP that would require revisions to cover the Northwest pond turtle. ODF is conducting habitat modeling to understand where there would be interactions with the Northwest pond turtle on or across the permit area and working with USFWS to refine their approach. She shared that ODF is also considering potential impacts to timeline.

HCP FEEDBACK FROM THE SERVICES

Melissa shared that the Draft Final HCP was submitted to the Services on October 31, 2024. ODF has received all comments from NOAA Fisheries and comments from USFWS through Chapter 5. ODF is cataloging responses and identifying which comments will require additional conversation with the Services. ODF and the Services will be meeting weekly to work through outstanding comments and holding several full day editing sprints in June and July.

Discussion

Question: Will the HCP timeline be shared with the ST and SC?

- **Lance Kruzic:** Yes, the timeline can be distributed to the group.

SC DIRECTION TO ST

Ellen Palmquist asked the SC if they had any direction for the ST. The SC did not provide any direction.

APPROACH GOING FORWARD, NEXT STEPS, AND SUMMARY

Ellen Palmquist thanked SC and ST members for attending and shared upcoming meeting dates:

- August 26, 12-2pm – *HCP Joint SC ST Mtg*

Mike Wilson thanked the group for their attendance and for continuing to engage in the process before closing the meeting.