



EO Regional Forest Practice Committee Meeting Minutes for October 10, 2024

I. Roll Call

Committee Members Present		Committee Members Not Present
Chair Bob Messinger Elwayne Henderson Bobby Douglas Todd Kurtz	Jeremy Grose Chris Johnson Paul Jones	Paul Oester
ODF Staff		Guests/Public
Emily Gregorio Kyle Abraham Gina Miner Kirk Ausland Greg Wagenblast Tracy Brostrom Mirms Miller	Scott Swearingen Hans Rudolf Jim Gersbach Terry Orton Jennifer Ward Joe Touchstone	Leigh Ann Vradenburg Heidi [Last name not provided]

II. Chair Comments – Chair Messinger

- i. Chair Messinger called the meeting to order.
- ii. Roll call was completed, and a quorum was established.
- iii. There were no chair updates or agenda changes.
- iv. There was no public comment at this time.

III. Division Updates – Kyle Abraham and Gina Miner

- i. Kyle Abraham provided a division update with the following information noted:
 - A. Reviewed organizational charts, noting that advisors are ODF employees that work across the division.
 - B. Provided a fire season update from the division. The following was noted:
 - a. Many division staff were out on fires which complicated the completion of some work such as technical guidance.
 - b. ODF is heavily engaged in post-fire recovery efforts.
 1. There are programs in place with federal partners to sign up and work with stewardship foresters for relief or cost-share options, and other options such as nursery capacity and seedlings are being considered as well.
 2. The Board of Forestry (BOF) will be on a retreat in Pendleton to tour part of the Battle Mountain Complex and discuss historic fire season impacts, costs, and long-term planning.
 - C. Discussed committee membership and the September BOF meeting. The following was noted:

Pursuant to public notice made by news release with statewide distribution, a committee meeting of the Eastern Oregon Regional Forest Practice Committee [an advisory body to the Oregon Board of Forestry with authority established in Oregon Revised Statute 527.650] was held on October 10, 2024, hosted by the ODF Forest Resources Division

- a. There is one vacancy currently and the pending resignation of Paul Oester.
 - b. DEI continues to be discussed, briefly mentioning recent articles about DEI within the agency. There are statutory requirements for membership, and ODF will work with the DEI officer for nominations. The committee's role is providing advice on operational feasibility of rulemaking, to review guidance, and have a working knowledge base of the rules and regularly engaging with them
 - 1. Chair Messinger asked where the articles were posted.
 - i. ACTION: Gina Miner and Kyle Abraham responded that they would send out a link.
 - c. Chair Messinger noted that he and Gina Miner looked for diverse members, but they declined. Kyle Abraham mentioned the news release in July which resulted in many members of the public showing interest in joining.
 - 1. ACTION: Chair Messinger asked the committee members to send diverse nominees to Gina Miner.
- D. Provided a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) update, noting that the administrative draft for HCP was sent to the federal services in July for an initial review and comments are expected in October. The Federal public review process has not been started yet. There are steps to do still, but the agency is on track to have Incidental Take Permits by the end of 2027.
- E. Discussed the recent post-disturbance harvest rulemaking, noting the following:
- a. The updated rules were pulled off the BOF agenda for final decision in June and September, so there is still draft rule language. ODF is waiting for comments from the federal services, at which time the draft rules will be adjusted to incorporate their feedback to prevent rulemaking slowdown.
 - b. Chair Messinger asked if Kyle Abraham thought this would be the normal process here forth, noting that it would diminish the committee's role. Kyle Abraham stated that it will not be and that all rulemakings will be back to the prior PFA processes.
- ii. Gina Miner presented a fire season summary.

IV. Operator of the Year Discussion and Voting – Greg Wagenblast

- i. Greg Wagenblast discussed the program details defined in the directive.
 - A. Multiple merit awards can be presented if the nominees are within different districts, but only one Operator of the Year. An operation can be renominated.
- ii. The committee reviewed the corresponding videos for Green Diamond Resource Company, Arrowhead Logging LLC., and BTO Forestry Solutions, Inc. and discussed each operation.
 - A. In discussion about Green Diamond Resource Company's nomination the opportunity for a stewardship award or other award was discussed.
- iii. Paul Jones presented a motion to select BTO Forestry Solutions as Operator of the Year, to give merit awards to Green Diamond and Arrowhead Logging, and to look into a stewardship award for Green Diamond. Elwayne Henderson seconded the motion.

Voting as follows: Chair Messinger, yes, Todd Kurtz, yes, Chris Johnson, yes, Elwayne Henderson, yes, Paul Jones, yes, Bobby Douglas, abstain, Jeremy Grose, yes. Motion passed.

A. ACTION: Greg Wagenblast to complete next steps for Green Diamond and the stewardship award, noted that they can be resubmitted again next year.

iv. Greg Wagenblast discussed changes from directive to agency policy and the opportunity to update the context for the Operator of the Year program moving forward. He also mentioned the region differences created in the Private Forest Accord compared to the Forest Practices Act and stated that changing boundaries would require rule change effort.

A. Bobby Douglas expressed support in updating the Operator of the Year information and suggested forgoing the tours moving forward if the videos are sufficient context for committee members.

B. The committee expressed interest in expanding the award programs as part of the directive update to acknowledge more types of operations.

V. Technical Guidance (FPTG) Development – Scott Swearingen

i. In an interest of time, Chair Messinger agreed to receive this information as a written update after the meeting.

A. ACTION: Scott Swearingen to complete a written update and Emily Gregorio to send it to the committee.

VI. Electronic Notification System (FERNS) Changes – Joe Touchstone

i. Joe Touchstone presented information. The following was noted:

A. Discussed the ability to change the operator. Editing a notification after submission is not possible because a submission is legally binding. The department will continue to have discussions, and there is a list of potential enhancements that is currently being prioritized.

B. Selecting “Did not Operate” in December does not automatically create an open NOAP into the next year in FERNS, but the notification can be copied for the new year and then updated for the activity dates to create a new notification.

C. The issue when importing .SHP files into FERNS is resolved.

VII. Forest Resources Training Strategy – Jennifer Ward

i. Jennifer Ward presented information. The following was noted:

A. Training information is on the ODF website for Forest Resources in a side bar and on YouTube.

B. Local offices also receive training.

C. Kyle Abraham asked committee members to send feedback to Jennifer Ward if there are areas where more training is needed for foresters.

VIII. Decision by Chair Messinger to change the agenda to postpone lunch until after the final presentation.

IX. Compliance Monitoring Update – Sarah Siefken

i. Sarah Siefken presented information. The following was noted:

A. Reforestation Study:

- a. Percentages are by harvest unit not acres. Data for harvested acres is not currently captured.
- b. There was good compliance.
- c. Sarah Siefken explained that the operations selected for a compliance monitoring study depends on the study itself and she outlined the process for the reforestation study.

X. Closing Remarks – Chair Messinger

i. Emily Gregorio covered who is still missing required training.

A. ACTION: Emily Gregorio to help Chair Messinger with Workday access.

B. ACTION: Emily Gregorio to send training to Elwayne Henderson.

ii. Chair Messinger adjourned the meeting.