



SW Regional Forest Practice Committee Meeting Summary for May 20, 2025

I. Roll Call

Committee Members Present		Committee Members Not Present
Dana Kjos, Chair Steve Swanson Michael Scott	Kale Woosley Chris Arnold	N/A
ODF Staff		Guests/Public
Kyle Abraham Jennifer Weikel Greg Erb Scott Swearingen Greg Wagenblast Nicole Stapp	Cody Lokan Emily Martin Mike Thompson Thomas Whittington Emily Gregorio Jennifer Ward	Bob Johnson Hunter Kjos Meghan Tuttle

II. Chair Comments

- Chair Kjos called the meeting to order at 10:00am.
- A quorum was established.
- There were no comments on the agenda or previous minutes, no public comment, and no chair updates.

III. Division and Agency Update – Kyle Abraham

- Kyle Abraham provided a division and agency update. The following information was noted:
 - Reviewed topline organizational chart – Kate Skinner as Interim State Forester and Tim Holschbach as Interim Deputy State Forester.
 - Reviewed State Forester hiring progress – the desired attributes and details of the position are being finalized, recruitment is intended to start in June; the proposed legislature to move the selection process to the governor is still within the legislative process.
 - Wildfire Funding bill is in review which would help the agency fund fire costs upfront, the hazard map repeal passed the floor, the Forest Product Harvest Tax bill is on hold, watching for outcome on the Severance Tax bill, and the last day of session is June 29th.
 - The revenue forecast was received and is projecting available resources down \$755M than anticipated in February, and overall general fund predicting to be higher than last biennium.

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- Reviewed Forest Resources Division organizational chart changes – Federal Grants Unit moved to the Administrative Division, most vacancies have been filled, and some units reorganized to create a new unit structure.
- Reviewed streamflow permanence progress – ODF, ODFW, and the PFA authors decided that there is currently no reliable model for predicting end of perennial flow with streams, so nothing to be in place by July 1, 2025. Surveys will continue for another year while a model is still being worked on.
- NRCS and other federal grants have uncertainty with signatures and renewals, so the agency is monitoring the situation closely.

IV. Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Update – Kate Thompson and Nicole Stapp

- Jennifer Weikel and Nicole Stapp provided a presentation on the current state of the HCP and rulemaking. The following was noted:
 - There is no timeline to have tethered logging rules in place.
 - The ODF website has information on rulemaking.

V. Chair Kjos adjusted the agenda to move to the next update item.

VI. Operator of the Year Program Revisions – Greg Wagenblast

- Greg Wagenblast discussed the opportunity for changes to the existing Operator of the Year directive, the option to add an additional award program, and the process that will be used for completing the changes as previously discussed in the October 2024 meeting. The following was noted:
 - The goal is to have a draft policy for final review and edits in spring of 2026 so that it can be used in 2027.
 - A working group will be created with a representative from each regional committee, stewardship foresters, and field managers – Michael Scott volunteered to be the Southwest Regional Forest Practice Committee representative for the working group.
- Reviewed the Fish and Wildlife Steward Award – Forest Lands, a joint award with ODF and ODFW to recognize landowners, as an option for nominees that do not fit into the Operator of the Year guidelines.
- Reviewed the existing Operator of the Year program. The following was noted:
 - All committee members agreed that they would like to keep the award program regional rather than changing it to statewide.
 - Chair Kjos and Steve Swanson noted that support of the award program is inconsistent with different ODF districts.
 - In discussion of the nomination criteria: Greg Wagenblast noted that people who do good all the time should be nominated, and that the word “exceeds” was suggested to be removed at the Northwest regional meeting.
 - Steve Swanson stated that he would like a way to recognize all parties that contributed to the success of the operation
 - The committee members agreed that recognition of good work in the industry is important.

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- Changes to the Operator of the Year program are to be completed first and then the landowner award option will be addressed afterwards.
- In discussion of the number of nominees: it was noted that each region is unique with Eastern Oregon being a large geographic area to cover, so the committee members discussed the options of: one nomination per district, having the RFPCs review the nominations and select which to tour with the others receiving a letter of commendation, or splitting up which members go to which sites rather than all members at all sites.

VII. Chair Kjos adjusted the agenda to take a 10-minute break and then move to the next update item before lunch.

VIII. Compliance Monitoring Project Update – Emily Martin

- Emily Martin provided a presentation on compliance monitoring. The following was noted:
 - Priorities and processes have been previously outlined and described in rule.
 - There is a committee working on describing how to do road maintenance.

IX. All Streams Crossing Technical Guidance (FPTG) Review & Technical Guidance Update – Greg Erb and Scott Swearingen

- Scott Swearingen provided an update on the Plan for Alternate Practice (PFAP) process. The following was noted:
 - A defined process flow and guidance is being developed along with an internal guidance that clearly defines roles and responsibilities.
 - PFAPs can now be tracked in FERNS to see which rule it is associated with.
 - A technical review step has been added to help the foresters, but foresters still approve or deny the PFAPs.
 - When a PFAP is being created there is communication with the agency beforehand to help develop a plan that can be approved. If the forester denies a PFAP they provide a reason why.
- Scott Swearingen reviewed the Forest Practice Technical Guidance update schedule. Finalized guidance is posted to the external ODF website.
- Greg Erb reviewed the changes made to the All Streams Cross FPTG. The following was noted:
 - The following additional recommended changes were noted:
 - Adjust the wording for “engineered designs” to account for people who may not have a staffed engineer.
 - Verify that the wording around “event history” aligns with rule.
 - Clarify the objective to indicate that fish crossings have other documents.
 - Guidance does not supersede rule, it is intended to add clarity.
 - Chair Kjos stated that he is concerned about guidance being used against people, adding that guidance not being correct is a concern.
 - The committee members agreed that a 1-month review period is sufficient.

X. Chair Kjos adjourned the meeting at 2:03pm.

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