

Board of Forestry Meeting Minutes

September 9, 2020

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Items listed in order heard.

Complete audio recordings from the meeting and attachments listed below are available on the web at www.oregonforestry.gov.

- (1) Presentation, [2020 Fire Season Update](#), Agenda Item 1

In accordance with the provisions of ORS 526.016, a meeting of the Oregon Board of Forestry was held virtually on September 9, 2020 and hosted at the Oregon Department of Forestry Headquarters on 2600 State Street, Salem, OR 97310.

All Board members joined the online Zoom webinar at 8:30 a.m. Chair Imeson called the public meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Board Members Virtually Present:

- Nils Christoffersen
- Cindy Deacon Williams (joined at 9:05 a.m.)
- Jim Kelly
- Joe Justice
- Brenda McComb
- Mike Rose
- Tom Imeson

Board Members Absent:

None

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. JULY 22, 2020 BOARD OF FORESTRY MEETING MINUTES
Approval of Board Meeting Minutes.

ACTION: The Board approved minutes from the July 22, 2020 meeting.

- B. REGIONAL FOREST PRACTICES COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS AND REAPPOINTMENTS
Approval of the appointments and reappointments for the Regional Forest Practice Committees (RFPC) in Oregon, per ORS 527.650.

ACTION: The Board approved the following eight reappointments and one new appointment.

Northwest Oregon Region:

Wendell Locke	term expiring September 2023
Steve McNulty	term expiring September 2023
Randy Silbernagel (p)	term expiring September 2023

Southwest Oregon Region:

Dana Kjos (Chair)	term expiring September 2023
Dan Fugate	term expiring September 2023
Darin McMichael	term expiring September 2023

Eastern Oregon Region:

Vacant	term expiring September 2022
Bobby Douglas (New)	term expiring September 2022
Vacant	term expiring September 2023
Patrick Marolla	term expiring September 2023
Chris Johnson	term expiring September 2023

(p) Public Member

C. **FOREST PRACTICES MONITORING UNIT UPDATE**

Department update on Private Forests Monitoring activities since the last update to the Board of Forestry in September 2019. Update includes the implementation study, two monitoring projects assessing effectiveness of riparian protections, and other monitoring-related work.

INFORMATION ONLY.

D. **FOREST HEALTH UNIT UPDATE**

Department overview of the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) Forest Health Unit's work on major insect, disease, and other damaging agents affecting Oregon forests in 2019-2020, as required by Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 527.335.

INFORMATION ONLY.

Mike Rose motioned for approval of the consent agenda items. Joe Justice seconded the motion. Voting in favor of the motion: Nils Christoffersen, Joe Justice, Jim Kelly, Brenda McComb, Mike Rose, and Tom Imeson. Against: none. With Board consensus consent agenda items were approved, and the motion carried. Cindy Deacon Williams absent for vote.

ACTION AND INFORMATION:

1. **STATE FORESTER AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

[Listen to audio](#) MP3 – (4 minutes and 28 seconds – 6.15 MB)

Chair Imeson commented on:

- Modification of the Board meeting agenda due to the fire state of emergency and the Department shift of priorities to respond.
- Outlined Board proceedings for Board members, presenters, and the public.
- Noted the public meeting will be live streamed, recorded, and posted online.

- Submitted written public testimony can be accepted through September 23, 2020, and included with the meeting record.

State Forester Daugherty commented on:

- Overview of the fire emergency across the state. Remarked on initial report findings, noted devastation of loss for homes and businesses, and offered condolences to the communities impacted. Explained how the Department is principally focused on life, safety, and point protection, as evacuations are in effect. Described how the Department staff are being impacted by the fires, and noted the loss of the Santiam Unit Office in Lyons, Oregon. Closed by introducing Travis Medema, Eastern Oregon Area Director as presenter for item one.

Board Member Comments: None

Public Testimony: No provision made for public testimony.

INFORMATION ONLY.

2. 2020 FIRE SEASON UPDATE

[Listen to audio](#) MP3 – (32 minutes and 2 seconds – 44 MB)
Presentation ([attachment 1](#))

Travis Medema, Eastern Oregon Area Director, opened by thanking all the emergency response personnel, the fire service, community leaders, and agency staff that have responded to the fires on the landscape. He explained the aftermath of large fires, as illustrated in California, is becoming a reality in Oregon and described the parallel impacts fire has on the terrain, communities, and resources. He reviewed the drought outlook for Oregon, noting the most problematic fires on the landscape are located in areas with abnormal or extreme drought conditions and listed the Oregon counties with drought declarations. Connected warm temperatures with drought persistence, reviewed the trending temperature and precipitation forecasted for fall 2020, and described how the forecasted conditions translate into wildfire potential for the state. He apologized the fire statistics to date were not updated with the latest Labor Day fires and acres burned, as these numbers are difficult to track in the current state of emergency.

Medema presented the fire briefing map, outlining the series of complexes and fires challenging the Department. He listed seven theaters of operation on the landscape, described the deployment of resources and incident command teams, estimated acres burned and communities impacted by the fires within each area. He explained the fires included in the briefing map were on the landscape before the Labor Day wind event. He listed the fires that received fire management assistant grants (FMAG) and described the potential of more FMAG's engaged as the fires continue to burn. He highlighted the main challenge to fighting these wildfires, as minimal to no resources available in the Pacific Northwest region or nationally, the growing magnitude of the wildfires, and the triage necessary to assess the loss of structure, property, and life. He described how the critical fire weather event developed, how the east winds have contributed to extreme fire danger, and the rapidly changing fire scenario on the landscape. He highlighted the strategic investment and utility of the night vision infrared technology in locating fires for successful initial attacks. Reviewed the 2020 safety statistics and five-year averages, as well as the COVID-19 module deployments organized for personnel responding to fire incidents.

Medema provided an overview of large wildfire cost, average acres burned, and fire season severity, but explained the graphs were outdated due to the catastrophic nature of the recent fire events and will be updated for the next Board meeting. He shared gratitude for Oregon's complete and coordinated fire protection system and the first responders actively responding across the state during these unprecedented times. He recognized the coordination and contribution of communities coming together to support one another in response and recovery. Medema closed by stating how the wildfire protection system in Oregon needs additional capacity and support, and how coordinated leadership by the Board, Executive Branch, and Legislative Branch will be crucial for Oregon to address this need.

Board members commented on the 2020 Fire Season Update Presentation.

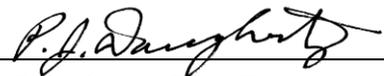
- Board Chair Imeson inquired about the weather forecast projected for the next several days and how it may affect the current fire situation. Medema outlined the last days of the east winds and warmer temperatures across the state. He noted the beginnings of an onshore push, which can bring moisture to the coastal region and the moderating east winds may provide fire operations opportunity to assess and establish control points over the weekend.
- Board Chair Imeson appreciated the fire report and grateful for the Department's expertise, dedication, and commitment in handling the challenges of this fire season.
- A Board member inquired about the Department's perspective on severity resources and initial attack resources with the current environment and fire conditions. Medema provided his perspective on the successful initial attack efforts, coordination of resources, and utilization of aviation assets for 2020. He mentioned during severe fire situations the importance of initial and extended attacks, as well as securing aviation resources and assets, but noted in the long-term how critical these assets will be.
- Board members echoed many of the sentiments and perspectives shared by the Department and the State Forester. One Board member shared a first-hand observation of the changing dynamic that Almeda and Obenchain fires presented for local communities in Rogue Valley. Noted how challenging the set of circumstances can be in any area of the landscape and thanked everyone for their remarkable response. Noted the difficulty with receiving up-to-date information as many in evacuated areas have limited to no power. Medema mentioned how the Board member's narrative highlighted the magnitude of the current fire situation.

Public Testimony: None

INFORMATION ONLY.

Board Chair Imeson adjourned the public meeting at 9:38 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/ Peter Daugherty



Peter Daugherty, State Forester and
Secretary to the Board

HR

Meeting minutes approved at the November 4, 2020 Board Meeting