

Agenda Item No.:	D
Work Plan:	Forest Resources Work Plan
Topic:	Federal Forests Restoration Program Overview
Presentation Title:	Federal Forests Restoration Program Overview
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Contact Information:	Kyle Sullivan-Astor, Federal Forest Restoration Program Lead (541) 285-8685, kyle.m.sullivan-astor@odf.oregon.gov

SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an overview of the Oregon Department of Forestry's [Federal Forest Restoration \(FFR\) Program](#) including what led to the Program's creation, what it does, and how its work connects Board priorities to federal forestlands in Oregon.

CONTEXT

Federal forests play a significant role in the Department's ability to fulfill its mission to protect, manage, and promote stewardship of all of Oregon's 30 million acres of forests. With approximately 60% or 17 million acres of Oregon's forests under federal ownership, the ability of the Department to achieve its mission relies, in part, on the management and health of Oregon's federal forests.

According to the [Governor's Council on Wildfire Response Report](#), 90% of the acres burned over the past 3 decades has occurred outside of the Department's protected lands (primarily federal lands) and of the 5.6 million acres at highest risk to wildfire, [65% occurs on federal lands](#). With one of the primary responsibilities of the Department to provide fire protection on the mostly non-federal lands in the state, the landscape condition, firefighter access and fuel loads of the adjacent federal forests affects the Department's ability to fulfill its fire protection responsibilities.

Given the large proportion of Oregon's forests under federal jurisdiction and the effect those forests have on adjacent forest landowners, working in partnership with federal agencies is becoming increasingly important. Also, leveraging the respective strengths and resources of partnering entities in an 'all hands, all lands' approach, leads to better outcomes than if those entities worked independently.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Over a decade ago, in recognition of the importance of federal forests in achieving the Department's mission, the Board of Forestry (Board) issued a report called [Achieving Oregon's Vision for Federal Forestlands](#), which established the Board's vision to "create forests that are ecologically sustainable, economically viable, and appreciated by all stakeholders". The report laid out a set of recommendations that would allow Oregon to address issues of declining forest health, lack of forest infrastructure, and decreased trust between stakeholders and federal agencies.

One of the recommendations in the Achieving Oregon's Vision for Federal Forestlands report was to create a federal forest liaison program. This recommendation was fulfilled in 2013 when the Federal Forest Restoration (FFR) Program was created by the Oregon Legislature. Today, the FFR Program works to achieve its mission to "accelerate the pace, scale and quality of forest

restoration” and is a mechanism to link Board priorities to federal forestlands in Oregon. [A video summarizing the FFR Program](#) and its history is available on the Department’s YouTube channel.

In 2018, House Bill 4118 (now [ORS 526.275](#)) passed the Oregon Legislature and made it a policy of the state to pursue projects under the Good Neighbor Authority that increase timber harvest volume, contribute to job creation, reduce wildfire risks to all lands, improve wildlife habitat and watershed health and stimulate local economies. This legislation guides the direction of the Department’s work on federal forestlands.

Looking ahead, the partnerships established with federal land managers and forest collaboratives through the FFR Program will be important to operationalizing the forthcoming 20-year strategic plan, which will prioritize restoration actions across all land ownerships in Oregon.

The Department’s work to restore federal forests was also described as a way to both adapt to and mitigate climate change in the Board adopted Climate Change and Carbon Plan, specifically as a supporting action of the goal to “Accelerate the pace, scale, and quality of climate appropriate forest restoration”.

The Federal Forest Restoration (FFR) Program uses the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) as a tool, in addition to other tools such as Cooperative Agreements and Grant Agreements, to work with federal forest management agencies and other partners in Oregon. The GNA is a tool in the FFR Program toolbox.

The FFR Program, has been working to achieve its mission of increasing the pace, scale and quality of federal forest restoration since 2013. Some select accomplishments of the FFR Program since inception include:

- Investment of \$4.3 million in grants supporting forest collaboratives and their ability to develop common scientific understanding, consensus, and achieve social license
- 20,000 acres of non-commercial fuels reduction and thinning, prescribed fire preparation, noxious weed treatments, wildlife habitat improvement, and stream enhancement
- 20,000 acres of commercial restoration, producing 107 million board feet of timber volume
- 9 contracted National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Categorical Exclusions (CE) projects covering over 35,000 acres
- 650 acres of post-implementation monitoring work
- On average, FFR Program investments have generated 38 jobs and \$3 million in GDP per year since 2013
- FFR Program staff engaging with the over 20 forest collaboratives in Oregon to inform federal forest stakeholders of the Department’s federal forest work

RECOMMENDATION

This agenda item is for information only.

ATTACHMENTS

- (1) Federal Forest Restoration Program Fact Sheet: December 2022 update

"Increasing Pace, Scale, and Quality"

Photo credit: Marcus Kauffman



FEDERAL FOREST RESTORATION PROGRAM UPDATE

2016–2022 ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

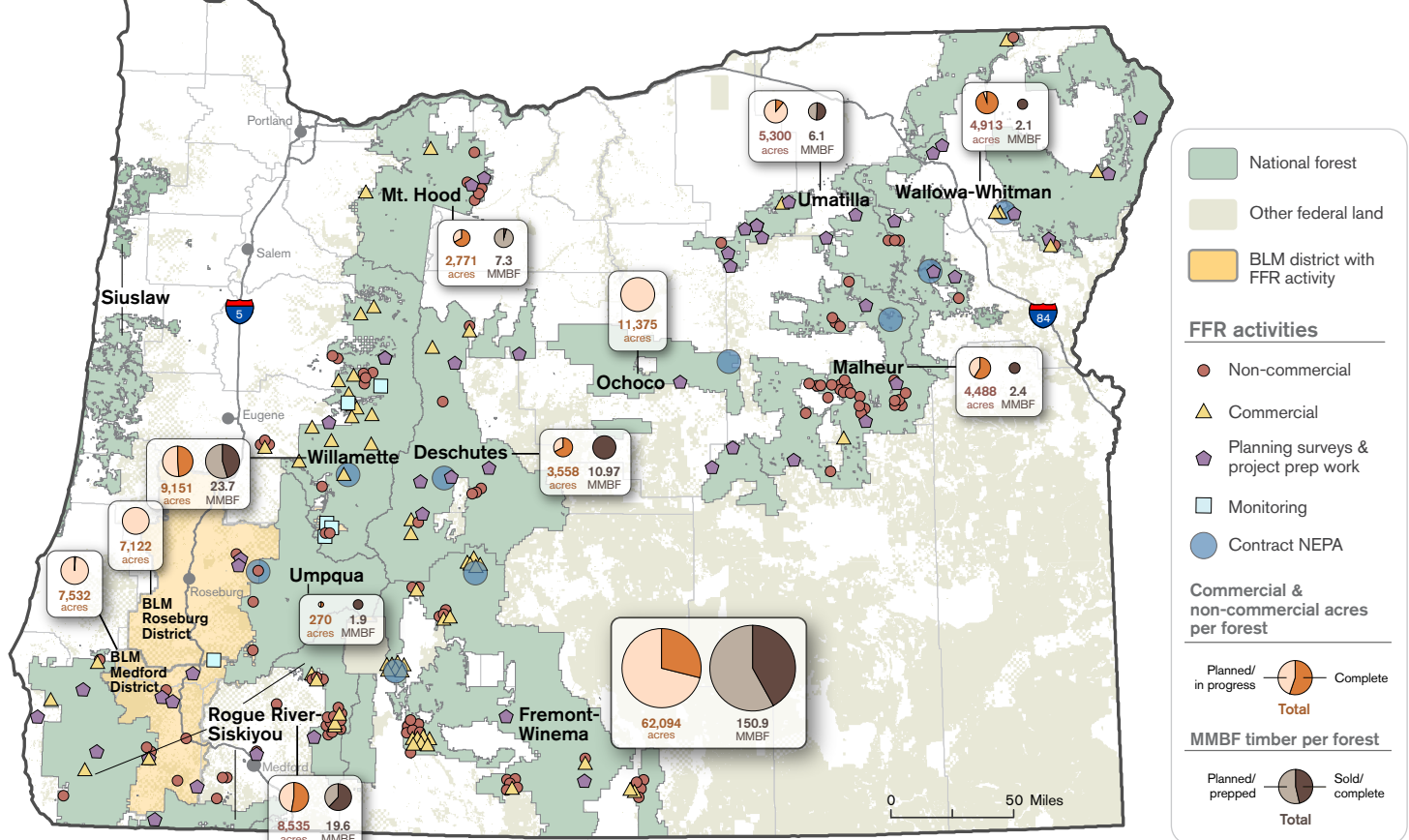
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Oregon Department of Forestry's (ODF) Federal Forest Restoration (FFR) Program continues to partner with federal land managers, who manage 60% of Oregon's forestlands, to address the millions of acres of Oregon's forests in need of landscape treatments¹. The FFR Program is performing treatments such as forest thinning, aquatic habitat improvement, or invasive species removal to restore forest health while creating jobs in the natural resources sector². As close to two-thirds of the acres at highest risk to wildfire are on federal lands³, efforts to create landscapes resilient to disturbance must involve federal lands in meaningful way.

Severe wildfire seasons have increased on all lands in Oregon in each of the past few decades. The 2020 fire season was one of the worst in modern times. Wildfires that year killed 11 people, burned more than 1.3 million acres, destroyed 3,522 buildings, cost over \$130 million in direct suppression costs and \$6.24 billion of indirect costs in loss of buildings, infrastructure, timber and grazing resources⁴. After those wildfires there was a call to restore the health and resilience of Oregon's forests. The goals were to reduce wildfire intensity and smoke, improve wildlife habitat, maintain water quality and quantity, and preserve recreational opportunities. This report sums up the state's efforts to achieve these goals and create healthy federal forests in Oregon. The report also fulfills the requirement of ORS 526.276 to report activities and outcomes of ODF's work on federal forestlands in Oregon.

Federal Forest Restoration Program Projects, 2016–2022



¹ The Governor's Council on Wildfire Response November 2019: Report and Recommendations: <https://www.oregon.gov/osp/Docs/GovWildfireCouncilRpt-FinalRecs.pdf>.

² Cassandra Moseley and Max Nielson-Pincus, "Economic Impact and Job Creation from Forest and Watershed Restoration: A Preliminary Assessment" (Ecosystem Workforce Program Briefing Paper #14; winter 2009; Institute for Sustainable Development, Eugene, OR).

³ December Final Mitigation Committee Report: <https://www.oregon.gov/odf/fire/documents/governors-council-mitigation-committee-report.pdf>.

⁴ Oregon Legislative Fiscal Office 2020 Fire Season Report: <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/201911/Downloads/CommitteeMeetingDocument/227139>

ODF's work on federal lands in Oregon:

The Federal Forest Restoration (FFR) Program uses the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) as a tool, in addition to other tools, such as Cooperative Agreements, to work with federal forest management agencies in Oregon. GNA helps the State achieve its vision for federal forestlands.⁵

31 agreements — with — **10** national forests (24 agreements) | **2** BLM districts (5 agreements) | **Forest Service PNW Regional Office** (2 agreements)

RESULTS:

Restoration service projects

Activities on **10** national forests, **2** BLM districts

covering **149,916** acres

including:

- Planning surveys & project preparation work:**
 - Wildlife, botany, heritage, or other resource surveys
 - Remote sensing, stand exams, or other forest inventory work
 - Cruising, tree marking, unit layout, or other project preparation

932 planned, 26,723 in progress, 43,774 complete
71,429 acres
- Non-commercial work:**
 - Non-commercial fuels reduction, thinning, or forest health treatments
 - Prescribed fire
 - Wildlife habitat restoration or improvement
 - Stream enhancement or fish passage
 - Invasive/noxious weed treatments

7,074 planned, 20,788 complete, 44,349 in progress
72,211 acres
- Monitoring work:**
 - Post-implementation vegetation management and stream restoration monitoring

650 complete, 683 in progress
1,333 acres

11,442 planned, 73,262 in progress, 65,212 complete

Commercial Projects

64 Sales on **9** national forests

16 complete, 19 sold, 29 planned

over an anticipated **56,664** acres

and **225.1** MMBF (million board feet)

3,994 complete, 35,903 planned, 16,767 sold

119.9 planned, 87.4 sold, 19.9 complete

Contract NEPA projects

12 Projects on **7** national forests

9 complete, 3 in progress or proposed

over an anticipated **74,577** acres

during:

- 2019: 3 completed
- 2020: 2 completed
- 2021: 1 completed
- 2022: 3 completed
- 2023: 3 anticipated

37,363 in progress or planned, 37,214 complete

⁵ <https://www.oregon.gov/odf/working/documents/achieving-oregons-vision-for-federal-forestlands-report.pdf>

2021–23 Biennium Update:

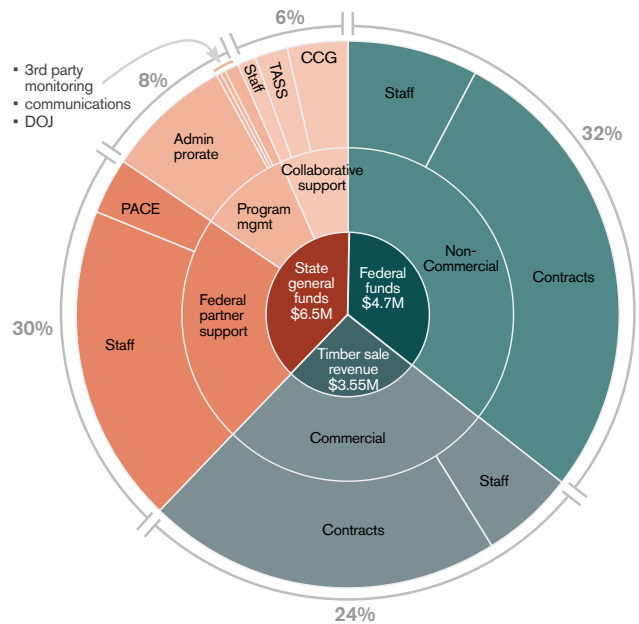
Changes and updates for the FFR Program for the current 2021–23 biennium include:

- \$6.5 million in state investments in the program is expected to leverage \$8.25 million in federal funds and project revenues
- Expansion of staffing from 9 to 25 permanent staff
- A new Master Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) agreement signed with USFS lasting through 2032

\$14.8M Total

» \$6.5M (44%) State

» \$8.25M (56%) Federal



Forest Collaborative Support:

“CCG funding supported the development of zones of agreement that resulted in annual fuels group meetings which enhanced community wildfire protection planning, partnering on projects, and the development of common communication efforts in the Rogue Basin.”

- Terry Fairbanks, Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative (SOFRC) Facilitator



Members of SOFRC meet in a field trip. Photo credit: Terry Fairbanks

\$725,000 to support Oregon forest collaboratives

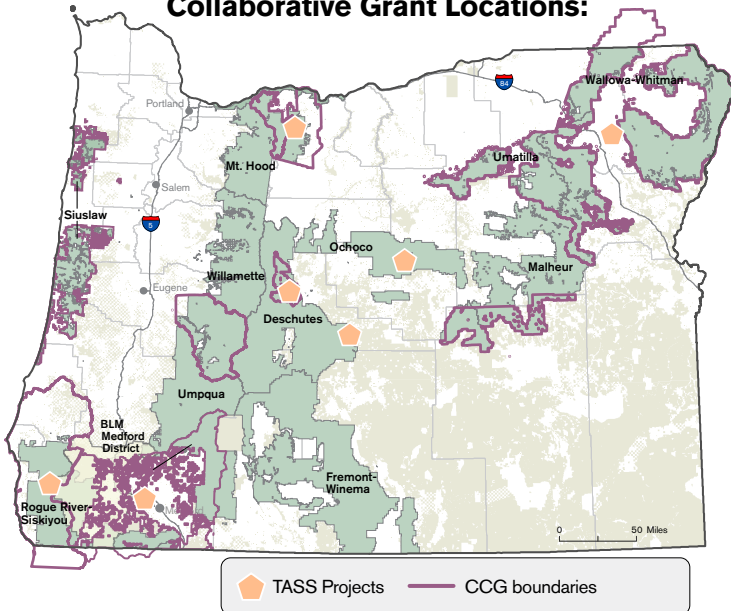
\$476,829 in Collaborative Capacity Grants (CCG) provided to 8 groups

- Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative
- Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative
- Wasco-Hood River Forest Collaborative
- Wild Rivers Coast Forest Collaborative
- Harney County Forest Collaborative
- Northern Blues Forest Collaborative
- Oregon Central Coast Forest Collaborative
- Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project

\$250,000 in Technical Assistance and Science Support (TASS) to 7 projects

- A carbon storage potential study on the Malheur National Forest
- 2 fire and forest reconstruction studies on the Mt. Hood and Rogue-Siskiyou National Forests
- The Oregon Forest Collaborative Network, which convenes collaborative leaders across the state for efficient information sharing & higher functioning collaborative groups
- A user-made roads and trails assessment on the Deschutes National Forest
- Tethered-logging research on the Ochoco National Forest
- Road and sediment delivery analysis on the Rogue-Siskiyou National Forest

Collaborative Grant Locations:



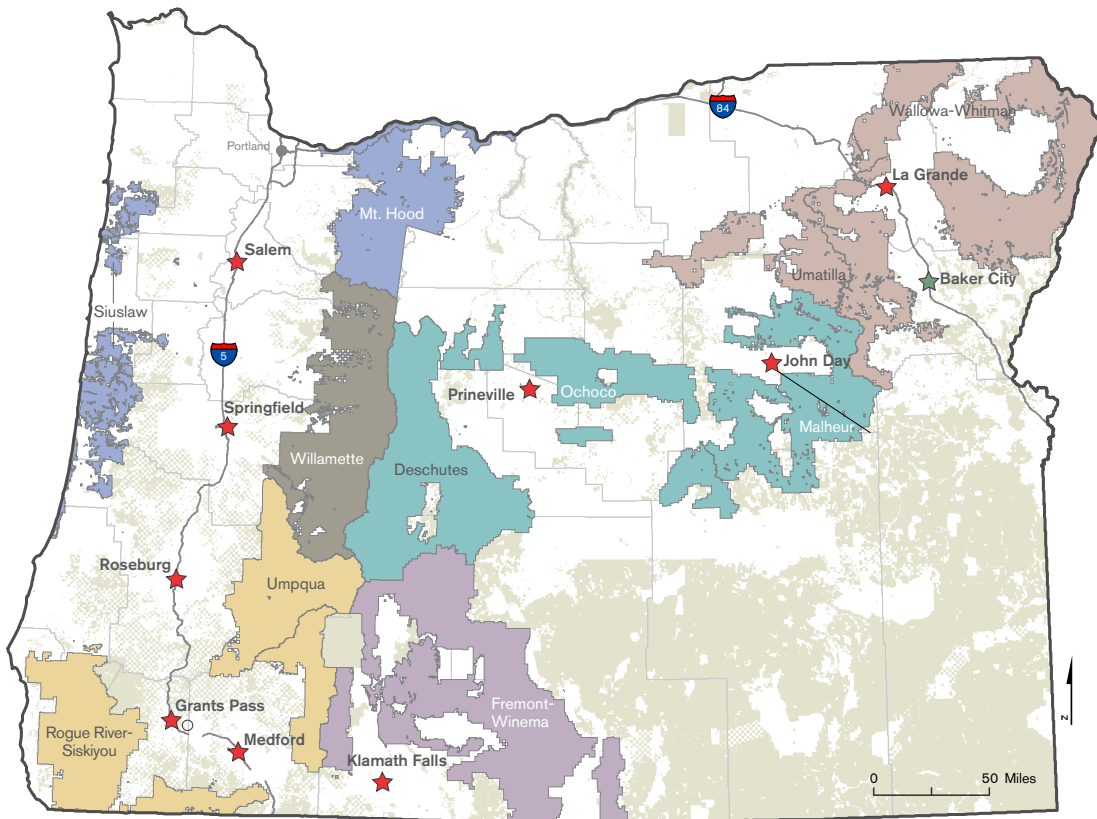
Members of SWFC meet in a field trip. Photo credit: Kyle Sullivan-Astor

“ODF TASS grants and GNA funding have helped collaborative members better understand the role of fire in the Rigdon landscape. Studies by UO and OSU provide context for why mechanical restoration is necessary to recreate the conditions to reintroduce fire and for native understory and fire dependent species to thrive in a warmer, drier climate.”

- Sarah Altemus-Pope, Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative (SWFC) Facilitator

2021–23 Biennium Targeted Accomplishments

(July 1, 2021–June 30, 2023)



- Northeast**
 - 6,000 NEPA survey acres
 - 2,000 non-commercial acres
 - 2 road maintenance miles
- Northwest**
 - 500 commercial acres
- Central**
 - 100 contract NEPA CE acres
 - 10,000 NEPA survey acres
 - 790 non-commercial acres
 - 720 commercial acres
 - 8.6 road maintenance miles
- West Cascade**
 - 250 NEPA survey acres
 - 640 non-commercial acres
 - 180 commercial acres
 - 26 road maintenance miles
 - 3 road decommissioning miles
- South Central**
 - 6,600 NEPA survey acres
 - 1,050 non-commercial acres
 - 5,300 commercial acres
 - 22 road maintenance miles
- Southwest**
 - 2,000 NEPA survey acres
 - 14,600 non-commercial acres
 - 470 commercial acres
 - 48 road maintenance miles

100 acres	24,000 acres	19,000 acres	7,100 acres	47,000 MBF	100 miles
contract NEPA CE	NEPA Survey	non-commercial treatments	commercial treatments	volume sold	deferred road maintenance

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: PADDOCK BUTTE

The Paddock Butte GNA project on the Fremont-Winema National Forest was the first commercial Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) project in Oregon and is adjacent to private forestland. In 2018, with the support of state FFR project implementation (crew) funds, this project was started using ODF’s capacity. With the goal of improving forest health and reducing the risk of stand-replacing wildfire, ODF completed the 637-acre project in 2020. The revenue from Paddock Butte GNA funded treatment of an additional 1,100 acres of non-commercial juniper removal and leveraged NRCS to conduct treatments on the adjacent privately owned forestland. A total of 3,300 acres of combined treatments on both federal and private lands are planned to be completed in this cross-boundary project area.



Before treatment

After treatment

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: KAHLER DRY FOREST

The Kahler Dry Forest Restoration project on the Umatilla National Forest began in 2011. It was supported by the Federal Forest Restoration (FFR) Program in a variety of ways, touching almost every component of the FFR Program. First through a Collaborative Capacity Grant to the Umatilla Forest Collaborative (now the NBFC), who engaged early in planning of the project. This collaborative was also selected to receive a Technical Assistance and Science Support (TASS) grant in the 2017-19 biennium. The Kahler project also received Planning Assistance and Categorical Exclusion (PACE) funds in 2013-15 and Crew funding in the 2015-17 biennium (respectively). In 2021, a portion of the E-board funding ODF received allowed ODF to partner with Sustainable Northwest to continue dry forest restoration work in this project area.



Before treatment

After treatment

Contributors: Kyle Sullivan-Astor, Michael Coughlan, Naomi Serio. Funded by Oregon Department of Forestry. AGENDA ITEM D Attachment 1