

STATE BOARD OF FORESTRY

MEETING SUMMARY

July 16, 2025

Wednesday, July 16, 2025

For full meeting recording, please visit the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Xk_0XOJwV8

For specific agenda items, click the agenda title to go directly to the recorded segment.

Meeting Called to Order

Chair Jim Kelly called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was held virtually and the following members of the Board of Forestry were present via Zoom conferencing: Jim Kelly, Liz Agpaoa, Heath Curtiss, Alexi Lovechio and Brenda McComb. Joe Justice was also present, but joined after roll call had concluded. Ben Deumling was absent and excused.

Board Member	Present	Absent
Liz Agpaoa	X	
Heath Curtiss	X	
Ben Deumling		X
Joe Justice	X	
Alexi Lovechio	X	
Brenda McComb	X	
Chair Jim Kelly	X	

Staff present to support the meeting included Interim State Forester Kate Skinner, Board Administrator Eleni Collins, Matt DeVore, Assistant Attorney General for the Department of Justice, Geoff Huntington, Senior Natural Resources Policy Advisor for Governor Kotek's Office and Chandra Ferrari, Natural Resources Policy Advisor for Governor Kotek's Office.

AGENDA ITEM 1 – OPENING COMMENTS

Chair Kelly provided an overview of the meeting agenda and best practices for online participation in the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – STATE FORESTER RECRUITMENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Geoff Huntington, Senior Natural Resources Policy Advisor for Governor Kotek's Office and Chandra Ferrari, Natural Resources Policy Advisor for Governor Kotek's Office provided an overview of the State Forester recruitment plan. This plan was developed by the Governor's Office with collaboration from DAS, and picking up where the Board of Forestry left off in its planning. The presentation provided the Board with the following:

- An overview of the recruitment tasks and timeline, with the November of 2025 identified as the planned date for Senate confirmation of the Governor selected appointment.
- A point of contact for the recruitment, which they have identified as Chandra Ferrari.
- Areas of collaboration between the Governor's Office and the Board of Forestry during the recruitment process.
- How Board members can engage with outreach on the recruitment, and provide feedback to the Governor's Office.

Board members offered several comments and questions in response to the presentation. A highlight of the concerns brought up included:

- Questions on Board of Forestry members discussing the State Forester appointment, what are the concerns around serial communication? The response was that since the hiring of the State Forester is no longer Board business, Public Meetings Law is not applicable. There are no concerns regarding Board member discussions of feedback on the candidates and process.
- Comments on the skills and experience listed in SB 1051 for State Forester skill requirements

AGENDA ITEM 3 – BOARD DISCUSSION

Chair Kelly opened up the floor to allow for greater Board discussion on the subject of Board authority and role with the Department of Forestry. Questions that were asked highlighted some of the following items:

- Trying to determine the Board's role with the removal of authority but continued responsibilities
- Concerns that Board feedback on State Forester performance may be overruled by the Governor's Office if the Board identifies concerns, they will be unable to act on them.
- Concerns that the Governor's Office may not be capable of keeping tabs on the Department performance to the capacity the Board may have been able to.
- How the Governor's Office will support the incoming State Forester during uncontrollable and chaotic situations, as opposed to ending their appointment.
- What is the point or purpose of having the Board develop performance measures related to the State Forester performance if the Board does not have the same authority?

The above comments and concerns were addressed by the Natural Resource Policy Advisors with the Governor's Office before they had to depart. The highlights below were expressed amongst Board members for Board discussion, with some feedback from DOJ counsel:

- What authority does the Board have to enforce their policy and implementation interests if the Department is not in alignment with the Board's decisions?
- Concerns about how the Board may often be in conflict with the Governor's Office, and what changes in administration may look like.
- Recognition of the Board of Forestry's role diminishing through recent policy developments. Reevaluate the frequency and length of meetings, especially if workload will be decreasing.
- Continued concerns over the responsibility without authority, and having to trust the Governor's Office to follow through with addressing the Board's interests and concerns.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – CLOSING COMMENTS

Chair Kelly offered the Board an opportunity to provide final thoughts and takeaways from this meeting. Board members offered closing thoughts and identified what they are thoughtful of on the horizon. Chair Kelly adjourned the meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:27 a.m.