

Work Plan: ODF Fire Protection

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DIVISION OVERVIEW

Purpose & Objective

The Protection from Fire Division is the oldest (since 1911) and largest (397 FTE) program of the Department of Forestry. The authorizing statute for the Division is ORS 477.005 stating, “The preservation of the forests and the conservation of the forest resources through the prevention and suppression of forest fires hereby are declared to be the public policy of the State of Oregon.” The program’s mission is to protect Oregon forestlands from fire, through a complete and coordinated system with our cooperators, including fire prevention, suppression, investigation and cost collection. The overarching programmatic goal is to minimize acres burned, the cost of suppression and the value of loss to resources through aggressive wildland fire initial attack, secondary only to the protection of human life.

Current Issues and Focus

There are several policy issues affecting the Protection Division that warrants the Board’s attention this coming year. Maintaining a complete and coordinated protection system requires periodic review and revisions of policy ensuring a dynamic and sustainable program that encourages participation by stakeholders and cooperators. Fire Protection financials will be reported as part of the agencies routine financial reports

This plan outlines key policy work that the Board has already committed to and/or anticipates making decisions on through 2022.

DIVISION TOPICS FOR THE BOARD OF FORESTRY 2020-2022

Ongoing Topics: Intermittently presented to the Board

Overview / Purpose

Approve Protection Budgets: As directed by statute, at the June Board of Forestry meeting, “The State Board of Forestry shall annually review the forest protection district and rangeland protection budgets, make any changes in the budgets that are proper and consistent with law, and pass final approval on all protection budgets and the prorated acreage rates therein.”

Association Letters: In each of the agreements with the non-operating forest protective associations, there is a requirement that each association will provide “...an annual letter from the Association to the Forester providing input on Department operations affecting the District or the Association (to be transmitted to all members of the Board)...” (State Forester letters).

Fire Season Reports: Staff will provide fire season reports annually, during the fire season.

Emergency Fire Cost Committee: As vacancies occur, the Board makes appointments to the Emergency Fire Cost Committee.

Forest Protection Association Agreements: Periodically, agreements are updated and Board approval of updated agreements are necessary under OAR 629-041-0100.

Rangeland Protection Association formation: Periodically, a request for a public hearing on the possible formation of a Rangeland Protection Association (RPA) will come before the Board for approval. Based on the outcome of the hearing, the Board may receive a request for approval on the formation of an RPA.

Board Deliverables with Timelines

At each June Board meeting, the budgets for the forest protection districts and rangeland protection associations, and copies of the State Forester letters will be presented to the Board for consideration as directed in statute and the association agreements. Fire season reports will be presented to the Board annually from June through September and as requested. All other ongoing topics will be presented to the Board on an as-needed basis.

Outreach and Public Involvement

- Prior to the June Board meeting, the forest protection district budgets are developed through local budget committees made up of landowners, reviewed and discussed at the forest protective association meetings, and required to go through a public hearing at district and unit offices.
- Public comments may be accepted on all annual and ongoing topics at Board meetings.

Evolving Topic: Governor’s Council on Wildfire Response

Overview

Following the 2013-2015 fire seasons, two parallel review processes were initiated: Secretary of State (SOS) Audit and the Fire Program Review. Both of these efforts are aligned to help continue a highly functioning wildfire protection system for Oregon into the future. The Department has fully embraced the findings and recommendations from both final reports. The 2017-2108 fire seasons experience reinforced the need for the agency to continue efforts on these recommendations. Additionally, The Governor issued Executive Order 19-01 creating the Governor’s Council on Wildfire Response.

- The SOS Performance Audit has offered a third-party review of the Agency’s ability to sustain its multiple missions, where an increased demand for the fire protection effort has been required from the entire agency.

- The Fire Protection Response Committee (FPRC) was coordinated with all agency partners through a transparent process including legislators, governor’s office, forest landowners, and cooperators to reach for continuous improvement in Oregon’s complete and coordinated fire protection system
- The Governor’s Council on Wildfire Response offers 37 recommendations to improve Oregon’s wildfire protection system. Implementation of these recommendations is expected to be guided through legislative committee and the governor’s office.

Purpose

These reports have provided a roadmap for ongoing Fire Protection policy work regarding fire funding, achieving a sustainable workforce across all programs and divisions in support of the agency’s fire protection mission, and providing for wildfire prevention and mitigation. This item remains on the Board’s work plan as an awareness item, maintaining the Protection Division’s focus on: “Protecting Oregonians, our Forests and Communities from Wildfire” through implementation of the recommendations from the 2016 Fire Program Review, SOS performance audit and the Governor’s Council on Wildfire Response.

Board Deliverables with Timelines

The Board will be updated and when appropriate, asked to approve any policy level work and/or significant agency action planned to address the recommendations of the Secretary of State audit, Fire Program Review Committee and Governors Council on Wildfire Response.

Outreach and Public Involvement

- Staff will work directly with internal and external partners and provide updates as necessary at meetings that include a broader range of landowners and stakeholders.
- Public comments may be accepted on topic at Board meetings.

Fire Protection Division Work Plan	2020					2021						2022		
	Apr	Jun	Jul	Sep	Nov	Jan	Mar	Apr	Jun	Jul	Sep	Nov	Jan	Mar
Issue: Annual and Ongoing Topics														
<i>Milestones</i>														
❖ Approve Forest Protection District and Rangeland Protection Association Annual Budgets		D							D					
❖ Review Letters from FPA's to State Forester		I							I					
❖ Fire Season Reports		I	I	I					I	I	I			
❖ Appointment for Emergency Fire Cost Committee (As Needed)														
❖ Approve Forest Protection Association Agreements (As Needed)														
❖ Rangeland Protection Association Formation (As Needed)														
Issue: Evolving Topic														
<i>Milestones</i>														
❖ Governor's Council on Wildfire Response														

Matrix Key:

- I** – Informational item
- D** – Final Decision item