

Chapter 3

Guiding Principles, Vision, and Goals



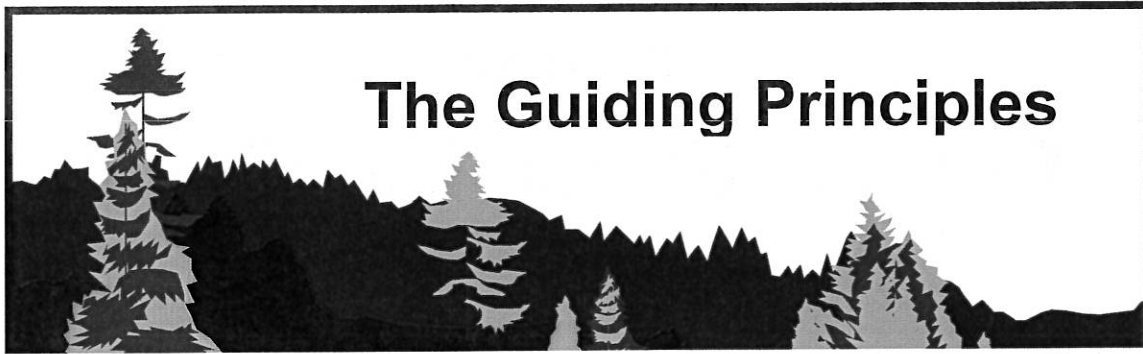
The previous chapter described the forest resources. The next step in forest management, according to Aldo Leopold, is to “... convert our collective knowledge of biotic materials into a collective wisdom of biotic navigation. ... This, in the last analysis, is conservation.”

Chapter 3 presents the guiding principles, forest vision, and resource management goals. These set the direction for the management plan — the compass that guides our navigation. This chapter also presents the working hypotheses that lead us to believe that we can indeed achieve the future vision and resource goals.

Chapter 4 explains the concepts and strategies that will be the navigation tools in forest resource management. Finally, Chapter 5 provides implementation guidelines and monitoring that will keep us on course as we implement the management plan.

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Guiding principles are the overall rules, goals, and responsibilities that guide the planning process for Oregon state forests. They arise from state and federal laws and administrative rules; policies of the Board of Forestry, State Land Board, and State Forester; and input from advisory committees, scientists, interest groups, and the public. The guiding principles for this plan were originally drafted and reviewed with the planning forum and the public at the beginning of the northwest Oregon planning process. The guiding principles have been amended since 1995, subsequent to adoption of a new administrative rule for state forest management; new scientific knowledge, especially about salmon and watersheds; and changes in social values.

- 1. The plan will recognize that the goal for management of Board of Forestry Lands is to secure the greatest permanent value to the citizens of Oregon by providing healthy, productive, and sustainable forest ecosystems that over time and across the landscape provide a full range of social, economic, and environmental benefits to the people of Oregon. The goal for management of Common School Forest Land is the maximization of income to the Common School Fund over the long term.**

Most of the northwest Oregon state forests (97 percent) are Board of Forestry-owned land. The remaining lands (3 percent) are Common School Forest Lands, owned by the State Land Board. The Oregon Department of Forestry manages all state forest lands in northwest Oregon for both landowners. Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR 629-035-0000 through 629-035-0100) describe the Board of Forestry's guidance to the State Forester for managing Board of Forestry Lands:

To secure the greatest permanent value of these lands to the state, the State Forester shall maintain these lands as forest lands and actively manage them in a sound environmental manner to provide sustainable timber harvest and revenues to the state, counties, and local taxing districts. This management focus is not exclusive of other forest resources, but must be pursued within a broader management context that:

- a) Results in a high probability of maintaining and restoring properly functioning aquatic habitats for salmonids, and other native fish and aquatic life;
- b) Protects, maintains, and enhances native wildlife habitats;
- c) Protects soil, air, and water; and
- d) Provides outdoor recreation opportunities.

The Oregon Constitution (Article VIII, Section 5) authorizes the State Land Board to manage Common School Forest Lands “with the object of obtaining the greatest benefit for the people of this state, consistent with the conservation of this resource under sound techniques of land management.” According to a 1992 opinion of Oregon’s Attorney General, the “greatest benefit for the people” standard requires the State Land Board to use the lands for schools and the production of income for the Common School Fund. The resources of the lands are not limited to those such as timber that are currently recognized as revenue generators for the Common School Fund. The Land Board should consider other resources, such as minerals, water, and plant materials, that may offer revenue for the fund. In addition, the Land Board may take management actions that reduce present income if these actions are intended to maximize income over the long term.

2. The plan will recognize that ecosystem restoration and watershed health are among the key goals that this plan must achieve, in a manner that is aligned with the policy direction for Board of Forestry and Common School Forest Lands.

When the state acquired the northwest Oregon state forest lands, some lands had a legacy of repeated, large-scale wildfires, and other lands had already been extensively logged. Over the last several decades, a massive restoration project has been accomplished across these state forest lands. The plan will emphasize a continuing commitment to restoration activities, especially in the context of the decline of salmonids and the vital contribution that these forests can make to the success of large-scale regional efforts like the *Oregon Plan for Salmon and Healthy Watersheds*.

3. The plan will be a comprehensive, integrated forest management plan taking into account a wide range of forest values.

When we say that the plan will be comprehensive, we mean that it will include consideration of the following commodity and amenity resources and issues.

- Agriculture and grazing
- Air quality
- Cultural resources
- Energy and minerals
- Fish and wildlife
- Forest condition (health and biodiversity)
- Land base and access
- Plants
- Recreation and scenic resources
- Social and economic issues
- Soils
- Special forest products
- Timber
- Water quality
- Water supply
- Wetlands

For each of these resources and issues, the plan will include:

- A description of the current condition of the resource or issue.
- A summary of the information known about the resource or issue.
- The management goals for development and/or protection of each resource.
- The strategies that will be used to accomplish the management goals.

An integrated plan provides for development and protection of forest resources across the landscape. Single use focus is avoided. Compatible uses are emphasized.

4. The plan will be developed within the context of Northwest Oregon State Forests as managed forests.

The majority of northwest Oregon state forest lands are owned by the Board of Forestry. The statutes governing management of Board of Forestry lands are contained in Oregon Revised Statutes, Chapter 530. Oregon Administrative Rules direct that these lands will be actively managed. Active management means applying practices, over time and across the landscape, to achieve site-specific forest resource goals using an integrated and science-based approach that promotes the compatibility of most forest uses and resources over time and across the landscape.

The Oregon Constitution and the Admission Act of 1859 direct the State Land Board to manage the Common School Forest Land with the object of obtaining the greatest benefit for the people of Oregon. The primary goal is the generation of the greatest amount of income for the Common School Fund, an educational trust for the benefit of all Oregon school children. This goal is discussed in more detail under guiding principle 1. Timber harvest from all Common School Forest Lands managed by the Department of Forestry has produced over \$230 million for the Common School Fund over the past twenty years.

The Oregon Department of Forestry manages these lands under an agreement with the State Land Board to prepare and carry out programs for the management, control, and protection of the Common School Forest Lands.

5. The plan will acknowledge the protected and recognizable interest of the counties from which most of the Board of Forestry Lands were originally derived.

Significant portions of the state forests were originally private lands that reverted to counties as tax-delinquent properties. Eventually these properties were deeded to the state with assurances that the lands would be managed to produce revenue and the counties would share in the revenue that was produced. The counties' input and advice into the management of Board of Forestry lands is organized through the Forest Trust Lands Advisory Committee, authorized by statute as an advisory committee to the Board of Forestry.

6. The plan will recognize that the forest is intended to be an important contributor to timber supply for present and future generations.

State forest lands in northwest Oregon represent approximately 8 percent of the forested area in northwest Oregon, and are an important contributor to the timber supply for the next century. In Clatsop and Tillamook Counties, state forest lands represent a much larger percentage of the timberland and will play a much more significant role in contributing to timber supply in these counties.

The majority of northwest Oregon state forests are second growth, created from early reforestation efforts following harvesting and the Tillamook fires. The age class structure for northwest Oregon state forests is dominated by the 35-65 year age class (roughly 57 percent of the forest). The 65 plus age class accounts for about 25 percent of the forests.

7. Lands will be identified and managed to provide for a sustained contribution, biological capability, and economic and social values. The plan will recognize that there will be trade-offs between revenue-producing activities and non-revenue-producing activities.

An important part of managing the northwest Oregon state forests is the concept of promoting healthy, sustainable forest ecosystems that:

- a) Produce timber and revenues for the state, counties, and local taxing districts;
- b) Result in a high probability of maintaining and restoring properly functioning aquatic habitats for salmonids, and other native fish and aquatic life;
- c) Protect, maintain, and enhance native wildlife habitats;
- d) Protect soil, air, and water; and,
- e) Provide outdoor recreational opportunities.

As part of the planning process, existing inventories will be utilized and data collected on a number of resources. The planning process will also evaluate the economic and social impacts of management decisions and the overall role of state forests in local economies. As dictated by the statutory obligations for these forests, the forests will be managed "so as to secure the greatest permanent value of such lands to the state," consistent with the guidance provided in the administrative rules. This management will be consistent with sustainable ecosystem and social values, which include impacts to local communities and amenity values on the forest.

8. The plan will examine opportunities to achieve goals through cooperative efforts with other agencies, user groups, or organizations.

Management objectives can often be achieved more effectively and efficiently through collaboration with others. An example of cooperative efforts already taking place is the relationship between the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Department of Forestry. The two agencies work together to provide increased forage for big game through forage seeding and pasture land management, to reduce harassment of big game by closing

roads, and to incorporate fish and wildlife considerations in timber sale plans by working with local biologists.

Additional opportunities will be explored in the forest planning process to pursue cooperative efforts with adjacent landowners, user groups (both commodity and amenity oriented groups), and other individuals and groups who are interested in the management of northwest Oregon state forests.

9. Diverse input from a variety of interested parties, including user groups, business interests, adjacent landowners, and the general public will be a high priority throughout the planning process.

Public involvement in the northwest Oregon state forests planning process is based on the concept that inclusion and consideration of diverse viewpoints is critical to gaining public understanding, acceptance, and support.

The goals for public involvement are:

- To seek insight, opinions, and data on planned management actions on northwest Oregon state forest lands.
- To build understanding, acceptance, and support for the forest resource management planning process and decisions.
- To offer information to the public about forest systems and forest stewardship.
- To provide the public with meaningful opportunities to comment and affect planning decisions at a time when public involvement can contribute positively to the planning decisions under consideration.

10. The plan will be goal-driven.

A goal-driven plan begins by defining overall management goals for the forest. Examples of overall goals for the forest are found in these guiding principles. Once these have been established, then specific goals can be developed for each resource. These specific goals spell out exactly what the vision is for the development or protection of the resource.

In contrast, an issue-driven plan begins by identifying concerns about existing management practices. It then works to analyze and address those concerns. This is usually done by developing a series of alternatives that deal with the issues in a piecemeal fashion. The problem with an issue-driven process is that it is easy to lose sight of the goals for managing the land. For this reason, the *Northwest Oregon State Forests Management Plan* will be goal-driven.

11. The plan will view northwest Oregon state forest lands in both a local and regional context.

Consistent with Oregon Administrative Rules and principles of good stewardship, planning will consider different geographic scales. These will include the immediate physical area, the watershed level, and the overall landscape, which may include other public and private ownerships.

In the area of northwest Oregon, approximately 54 percent of forest land is in public ownership. State forests represent about 15 percent of that total. The forest must be viewed in context with these other forest lands in the region. This view looks at both timber production and other resource issues.

For example, evaluation of the recreation resource will include an assessment of the types and quantities of various recreation opportunities available on forest lands throughout northwest Oregon. Based on this information, the appropriate role of state forest lands in providing specific recreation opportunities will be determined and described in the goals and strategies developed.

12. The plan will consider the overall biological diversity of state forest lands, including the variety of life and accompanying ecological process.

Oregon Administrative Rule 629-035-0000 defines biological diversity as “the genetic variation and the abundance and variety of microbial, plant, and animal life, the range of ecological functions, and the physical processes at any local or landscape scale.” This definition has been used throughout the planning process. It emphasizes process and the interactions that lead to landscape, ecosystem, species, and genetic diversity.

Managing for biological diversity requires managing at various levels of biological organization: species, genetic variation within species, communities of organisms, and functional diversity. The final item, functional diversity, includes the many processes in which organisms transfer energy with each other and the physical environment.

Strategies for biological diversity must deal with resources at two spatial levels: the forest stand and the broader landscape.

Managing for biological diversity also requires recognizing that certain concepts and many details of managing ecosystems require further testing and refinement. Because we lack complete understanding, an adaptive management approach is required that integrates management, research, and monitoring to accomplish goals and objectives.

- 13. Northwest Oregon state forest lands will be managed to meet state and federal Endangered Species Acts while fulfilling the Board of Forestry's other statutory responsibilities. Management plans for threatened or endangered species will seek to complement or supplement habitat provided by other landowners to the extent that such provision of habitat is compatible with administrative rules defining greatest permanent value.**

The forest management plan must comply with all federal and state laws. Although many laws apply to the management of state forest lands, legal requirements for protection of threatened or endangered species are expected to have the most significant impacts.

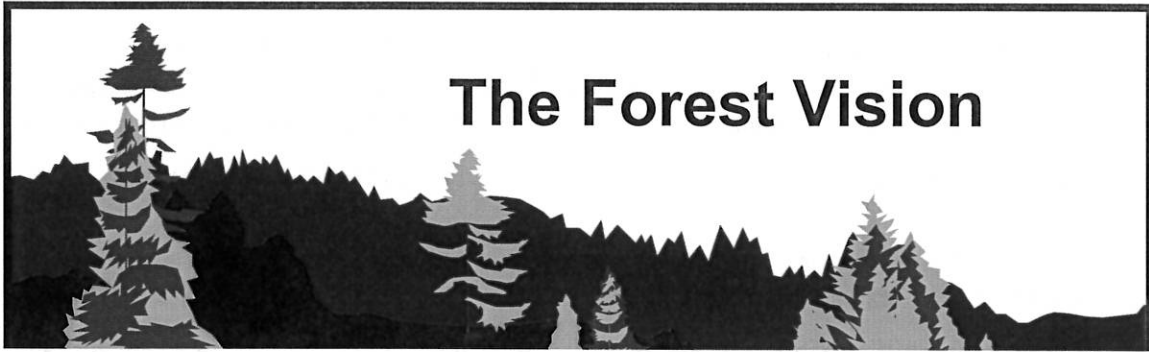
The intent of the plan is to adopt management strategies that contribute to providing for the survival and recovery of currently listed threatened and endangered species, and assist in preventing future listings of other species. The fact is recognized, however, that northwest Oregon state forests are one part of a larger landscape, and cannot by themselves provide sufficient habitat to guarantee the survival or recovery of a species. When managing habitat conditions on northwest Oregon state forests, planners should consider conditions on other public and private lands, in order to ensure that state forest lands contribute to species recovery goals.

- 14. The plan will commit the Oregon Department of Forestry to using monitoring and research to generate and utilize new information as it becomes available, and employ an adaptive management approach to ensure that the best available knowledge is acquired and used efficiently and effectively in forest resource management programs.**

This plan will gather, for the first time, a wide range of available natural resources data for northwest Oregon state forests. However, new information will continue to become available after the plan's completion. Some information will be the result of specific research activities, such as the retrospective study for the northern spotted owl, which will provide demographic and habitat information. Other information will be collected through ongoing work conducted by state agency resource specialists.

New information will also become available through monitoring. The Department of Forestry is committed to an ongoing monitoring program.

As new information becomes available, the Department of Forestry will review and analyze its applicability to the management of the forest. Management of the forest will be adapted in light of the best available scientific knowledge.



The forest vision is a picture of the northwest Oregon state forests in the future. Like a mural painted on the side of a building, the forest vision has many images, which together form one larger picture. The forest described by the vision is that which the Oregon Department of Forestry feels will represent attainment of “greatest permanent value” to the citizens of the state, as defined in statute and rule. Achieving “greatest permanent value” means providing a full range of social, economic and ecological benefits, and achieving a balance between short-term and long-term economic returns.

The forest vision represents an idealized view of the future, without the constraints of the current forest condition. The strategies and implementation plans that follow will describe how each district can move from the current forest condition toward this future forest, and do so in a manner that meets the short-term needs for timber and revenue generation. The forest vision is written in the present tense, as if we are already in the future and actually looking at this idealized forest.

The forest described produces sustainable and predictable forest products that generate jobs and revenues for the benefit of the state, counties, and local taxing districts. The management approaches described reduce economic risks by producing a diverse mix of stand structures and associated timber products, and will lead to increases in the asset value of the lands over time.

The diversity of forest structures is enhanced over time, providing for a broad range of social values important to Oregon citizens, including recreation. The diverse forest structures produced contribute to the range of fish and wildlife habitats necessary for all native species, and contribute to broad biodiversity. This forest will provide the range of forest conditions that will need to exist to achieve the goals for all resources.

The Forest

The landscape has a broad range of forest structures and native tree species. The forest stands are predominantly conifer, although hardwoods are intermixed in most stands. Some stands and drainages are dominated by hardwoods. Typical stand structures are listed below.

- Regeneration stands, i.e., young stands with newly established trees, grasses, herbs, and shrubs.
- Stands in which the tree crowns have closed together, creating a closed canopy where very little light reaches the forest floor.
- Stands with some openings in the canopies and some canopy layering; these stands have newly established shrubs, herbs, and shade-tolerant trees in the understory.
- Open stands that have significant understory development. Vigorous herbaceous and shrub communities combine with tree crowns to create multiple canopy layers. Tree crowns and shrubs create a complex vertical structure from the forest floor to the tops of the tallest trees.
- Stands with large trees; multiple, deep canopy layers; substantial amounts of coarse woody debris; large snags; and other structures typically associated with older forests.

Well-stocked, healthy, and vigorous forest stands are the rule. Insect and disease agents are present at low levels, and are considered a normal part of a healthy forest. Insects, disease, minor windthrow, other natural events and active management create gaps throughout the forest. Gaps are relatively small openings within a stand, or small patches of a different vegetation type within a more general stand type. Stands vary in size from a few acres to hundreds or even thousands of acres, and generally have irregular shapes.

Hard and soft snags and down woody debris provide for soil productivity and habitat needs. Snags and down logs are located in all stand types, but occur in significantly different amounts in individual stands.

Although the forest maintains the same general balance of structures over the landscape through time, individual stands are changing continuously. This shifting mosaic of forest structures maintains vigorous timber-producing stands, contributes to the diversity of plant communities and wildlife habitats, and enhances overall biodiversity throughout the forest. The diverse mix of habitats includes habitat for species associated with older forest structures.

The forest contributes to the range of habitats needed by native fish and wildlife species in northwestern Oregon. Although the locations of specific types of habitat may change over time, the shifting forest mosaic provides an overall stability in the amount and distribution of various habitats. Because the state forests contribute to this mosaic of habitats, the risk is significantly reduced that species will become threatened or endangered due to forest habitat conditions.

Many recreational uses are available in the managed forest. Recreation occurs across the whole landscape — in areas intensively managed for timber, as well as areas where little timber management occurs. Specific sites or areas with low timber production capacity are managed primarily for public use values, with timber as an incidental use.

Thinnings, partial cuts, and regeneration harvests produce a predictable and sustainable supply of timber and revenue. Smaller diameter wood is produced from thinnings in the early stages of stand development. High quality timber is produced through silvicultural techniques and harvested through partial cuts and regeneration harvests. Timber harvest and silvicultural activities contribute to employment in local communities, and to increased volumes of timber and more diverse wood products flowing into local economies.

Riparian areas are dominated by stands of large conifers, with hardwoods flourishing on wetter sites. Healthy herb and shrub communities are part of the riparian environment. Many snags and down logs are found in and around streams. The riparian areas support a diversity of tree, plant, and animal species. Diverse riparian conditions contribute to healthy aquatic habitat elements. Although the specific locations of channels, deep pools, and other habitats shift over time, the mosaic of stream habitats has an overall stability. High quality fish habitat exists in most areas.

Management Perspective

The forest is actively managed to produce the various stand types in much shorter time frames than would occur in unmanaged stands. Management activities are scheduled to provide a sustainable flow of timber and revenue while maintaining the desired array of forest structural conditions over time. When natural events such as windstorms or fires affect forest structures, management activities are adjusted as needed to maintain the desired ratio of forest conditions.

Stewardship — Oregon Department of Forestry employees carry out good stewardship of the forest and its many resources efficiently and professionally. They coordinate with other state and federal agencies, nongovernment organizations, neighboring landowners, and other interested individuals to achieve the management goals for northwest Oregon state forests. The comprehensive management program is adequately staffed.

Monitoring — The monitoring program is an integral part of forest management. Monitoring provides feedback for adaptive management, ensuring that resource goals are being met, and that new information is incorporated into planning at all levels.

*"I have read many definitions of what is a conservationist, and written not a few myself, but I suspect the best one is written not with a pen, but with an axe ... A conservationist is one who is humbly aware that with each stroke he is writing his signature on the face of his land. Signatures of course differ, whether written with axe or pen, and this is as it should be."
(Aldo Leopold 1949)*

