

Agenda Item No.:	E
Work Plan:	State Forests Work Plan
Topic:	Programmatic ESA Compliance on State Forests
Presentation Title:	Western Oregon Habitat Conservation Planning Update
Date of Presentation:	March 7 th , 2018
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CONTEXT

The Board of Forestry (BOF) has directed staff to continue exploring options for achieving financial viability while increasing conservation outcomes, including the pursuit of a programmatic Endangered Species Act (ESA) compliance tool, such as a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). The State Forests Division (Division) is taking the following 3-phased approach to evaluate the possibility of an HCP to cover state forestland west of the Cascade Mountains:

- Phase 1: HCP Initiation/Scoping (*Timeline: Nov.2017-Nov.2018*)
 - Evaluate the business case for an HCP
 - Baseline data assessment
 - Conduct an open and transparent stakeholder engagement process
- Phase 2: Strategy Development (*Timeline: 2019*)
- Phase 3: National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) analysis and Consultation (*Timeline: 2020*)

The Division applied for a US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) HCP Assistance Grant to supplement existing resources and work through the process at a faster pace than if the Division is relying solely on the Forest Development Fund. The Department of Interior has adopted a new screening process for many federal grant programs, including the HCP Planning Assistance grants. This process has delayed awards for an undetermined amount of time.

To keep pace with the FMP revision process (Attachment 1: FMP/HCP Timeline), the Division will initiate Phase 1 regardless of grant funding. In the absence of funding, the work will initially focus on evaluating the business case for an HCP, and engaging stakeholders. The HCP Steering Committee will begin meeting to develop a vision for the HCP and the decision-making process. The baseline data assessment will be completed as time and staff resources allow. A complete list of strategies for accomplishing the work associated with an HCP in the presence or absence of an HCP grant is provided in Attachment 2: HCP Contingency Plan.

Recommendation

Information only.

NEXT STEPS

Next steps and time lines presented below are subject to change if the Division is not awarded the federal grant.

- In spring 2018, the Division will engage stakeholders, and begin an economic and conservation cost-benefit analysis to determine if there is a business case for an HCP on state forestlands.
- The Division will return to the Board in November 2018 to present the results of the business case, and provide a recommendation on whether or not an HCP is in the best interest of the state.

ATTACHMENTS

- FMP/HCP Process Timeline
- HCP Contingency Plan