

## DRAFT Guiding Principles

The Forest Management Planning rule (OAR 629-035-0030) identifies required elements for Forest Management Plans. Among these are: “Guiding principles that include legal mandates and Board of Forestry policies. Taken together, the principles shall guide the development of the management plan.” The Division proposes the following set of draft guiding principles for a revised Forest Management Plan (FMP).

**Principle 1: The Forest Management Plan will be grounded in the management mandates for Board of Forestry lands as expressed in the Greatest Permanent Value (GPV) and Forest Management Planning OARs, and the mandates for Common School lands.**

Oregon Administrative Rule Chapter 629, Division 35, Management of State Forest Lands, provides the foundation for the development of the Forest Management Plan for Board of Forestry lands. The Oregon Constitution provides the foundation for the management of Common School Forest Lands.

Division 35 includes definitions, findings and principles associated with acquired lands, language defining GPV, and direction for the development of Forest Management Plans. While the rule language is the ultimate source, the primary elements and themes in these rules include:

- *The resources and values articulated in the OARs:*
  - Sustainable and predictable timber harvest and revenues;
  - Properly functioning aquatic habitats;
  - Protection, maintenance, and enhancement of native wildlife habitats;
  - Protection of soil, air, and water;
  - Provision of outdoor recreation activities;
  - Consideration of landscape effect;
  - Protection from fire, disease, insects, and pests;
  - Also mentioned are: protection against floods and erosion, protection of water supplies, grazing, forage, and browse for domestic livestock, forest administrative sites, and mining leases and contracts.
- *The OARs direct that the FMP will include strategies that:*
  - Contribute to biological diversity of forest stand types and structures at the landscape level and over time;
  - Apply silvicultural techniques that provide a variety of forest conditions and resources;
  - Conserve and maintain genetic diversity of forest tree species;
  - Manage forest conditions to result in a high probability of maintaining and restoring properly functioning aquatic habitats;
  - Protect, maintain, and enhance native wildlife habitats;
  - Recognize that forests are dynamic;
  - Provide for healthy forests by using an integrated pest management approach and utilizing appropriate genetic sources of seed;
  - Maintain or enhance forest soil productivity;
  - Maintain and enhance forest productivity by producing sustainable levels of timber consistent with protecting, maintaining, and enhancing other forest resources;
  - Apply management strategies that enhance timber yield and value while contributing to the diversity of habitats for native fish and wildlife.

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- *State Forests are actively managed:* The rules require active management of state forests defined as “applying practices over time and across the landscape to achieve site-specific forest resource goals using an integrated, science-based approach that promotes the compatibility of most forest uses and resources over time and across the landscape.”
- *The plans are to use an integrated management approach, and pursue compatibility of uses over time and space:* Compatible means “capable of existing or operating together in harmony.” Integrated management means “bringing together knowledge of various disciplines (forestry, fisheries, wildlife, and water) to understand and promote land management actions that consider effects and benefits to all.”
- *The plans consider landscape context:* The rules direct that “landscape context” be considered. Landscape is defined as “a broad geographic area that may cover many acres and more than one ownership, and may include a watershed or sub-watershed areas.” Plans must contain “a description and assessment of the resources within the planning area and consideration of surrounding ownership in order to provide a landscape context.”
- *The counties have a recognizable interest:* The rules include a Board finding that the counties within these forest are located have a “protected and recognizable interest in receiving revenues from these forest lands; however, the Board and the State Forester are not required to manage these forest lands to maximize revenues, exclude all non-revenue producing uses on these forest lands, or to produce revenue from every acre of these forests lands.”
- *The plans incorporate an adaptive management approach:* The rules direct that plans be based on best science available, use monitoring and research to generate new information, and an adaptive management approach. Adaptive management means “the process of implementing plans in a scientifically based, systematically structured approach that tests and monitors assumptions and predictions in management plans and uses the resulting information to improve the plans or management practices used to implement them.”

Common School Lands: 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.” The primary obligation of the Land Board, as trustee, is to manage and protect these lands for the maximum short- and long-term benefit of the public schools, consistent with sound stewardship /conservation and business management principles. The Board is not required to maximize present income without regard to other considerations.<sup>1</sup>

**Principle 2 – State forests will be managed, conserved, and restored to provide overall biological diversity of state forest lands, including the variety of habitats for native fish and wildlife, and accompanying ecological processes. The Greatest Permanent Value and Forest Management Planning rules are the Board’s expression of providing conservation.**

The Greatest Permanent Value and Forest Planning rules include many attributes that are directly tied to providing conservation on Board lands. These references include but are not limited to: *providing and restoring properly functioning aquatic systems; protecting, maintaining, and enhancing native wildlife*

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<sup>1</sup> Department of State Lands Asset Management Plan 2006-2016.

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*habitats; contributing to biological diversity of forest stand types and structures at the landscape level and over time; and conserving and maintaining genetic diversity of forest tree species.*

**Principle 3 – Financial viability is the ability to generate sufficient income to provide values that support GPV. In the current business model 98% of revenue is derived from the sale of timber and all Board of Forestry expenditures and revenues are managed in the Forest Development Fund.**

Financial viability is achieved over the short-term with operational tools that ensure cash flow is available to State Forests. Services are prioritized based on funding availability, through tools including fiscal and biennial budgets, fiscal year operating plans, timber marketing, and annual operating plans. Financial viability is achieved over the long-term with business strategies that align anticipated funding availability with services that are prioritized by GPV. Several tools are used, including a business plan (e.g., diversification of revenue streams), business improvements, and financial metrics to assess future investments, revenue projections, implementation plans, the Forest Management Plan, and risk management.

**Principle 4 – The plan will provide for a range of social benefits for all Oregonians including direct and indirect financial contributions to local and state governments, ecosystem services, opportunities for public access and recreational use, support for local employment, and a process for participating in the forest management planning and implementation process.**

State forest lands support multiple social benefits on a variety of scales and seeks to contribute to community well-being for all Oregonians. They provide ecosystem services including clean air, clean water, shade, and wildlife habitat that enhance the quality of life for all Oregonians and draw visitors. Employment and revenues resulting from active forest management help support family wage jobs, contribute to economies, social services and education at the local, regional, and state levels. The Division provides lasting and diverse outdoor recreational, interpretive, and educational experiences that inspire visitors to enjoy, respect, and connect with Oregon's state forests.

**Principle 5 – The plan will recognize that investments in forest and watershed restoration are necessary to achieve desired outcomes that align with the Greatest Permanent Value policy direction for Board of Forestry and the "greatest benefit for the people" standard for Common School Forest Lands.**

Restoration efforts are considered when an area has been heavily altered to a non-desirable condition. This condition may have arisen for a variety of reasons, including: incomplete knowledge in previous management, unintended resource interactions, or even natural disturbance events with footprints that conflict with desirable outcomes given management goals. In these cases, restoration activities will be considered in an effort to move the resource to a more desired state, as articulated through management goals.

*Forest restoration:* 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. Oregonians approved bonds to implement a massive restoration project across these state forest lands, planting primarily Douglas-fir. Many of these Douglas-fir stands were seeded and planted with seed that is now known to be "off-site" (i.e., not genetically adapted to local conditions). A large portion of these

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reforested lands (e.g. 46% of Tillamook district) are affected by Swiss needle cast (SNC), a native fungus that affects the growth and vitality of forest stands. The combination of single species (Douglas-fir) stands and off-site seed is thought to increase the susceptibility of the stands to SNC. A long-term forest health strategy in the SNC zone is to actively manage stands to reduce the amount and proportion of Douglas-fir and increase the amount of native species not susceptible to the disease. In addition, appropriate seed sources will be used to replace the off-site seed. In addition to SNC, there are areas of compromised and under-productive alder stands, and other stands that would benefit from restoration treatments.

Disturbance events such as ice storms, wind events, floods, and fires can lead to under-productive forest conditions throughout State Forest lands that are susceptible to insect and disease. These stands often require immediate action to restore resilient and productive forest conditions.

The plan will recognize these restoration needs, and develop goals and strategies that seek creative funding mechanisms to implement them. The restoration effort will contribute to creating healthy forest landscapes that will be resilient in the face of climate change, fire, or other disturbance events and stressors. Monitoring and adaptive management will be an important component of the restoration efforts.

*Watershed Health:* For over 20 years, the state of Oregon has made a concerted effort to conserve and improve rivers and watersheds throughout the state, with the direct involvement of local communities. ODF's management plans and activities have been an important part of those efforts. The plan will continue to support the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) mission to "help protect and restore healthy watersheds and natural habitats that support thriving communities and strong economies" and emphasize a continuing commitment to restoration activities, recognizing the vital contribution that these forests can make to the success of large-scale regional efforts like the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds.

### **Principle 6 – The plan will be developed and implemented at a scale and pace that provide the appropriate geographic and temporal blend of economic, social, and environmental outcomes.**

The geographic scale of plan strategy and implementation will have an effect on the spatial distribution of plan outcomes. Likewise, the temporal pace of strategy implementation and investments will have an effect on the distribution of environmental, social, and economic outcomes over time. These dynamics will be considered in creating and implementing a plan that provides the most appropriate blend of spatial and temporal outcomes.

The plan will not individually optimize environmental, social, or economic outcomes, at each geographic scale, or for every time period, but will strive for the most geographically and temporally appropriate blend of environmental, social, and economic outcomes.

### **Principle 7 – The plan will provide varying levels of economic, environmental, and social outcomes over time as financial conditions change. While this approach will result in short-term trade-offs among specific goals, over the long-term Greatest Permanent Value will be achieved.**

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Different GPV outcomes may be emphasized at different time periods, depending on financial conditions. For example, when financial conditions are favorable, higher investments may be made in restoration efforts to promote forest stand development for both commercial (stand investment) and habitat goals. Fluctuating timber market conditions may favor more or less timber harvest, related to both economic outcomes and financial viability. Development and maintenance of recreation infrastructure may fluctuate based on competing priorities, such as external pressure for recreation versus budgetary constraints.

While the level of service provided for any given GPV outcome will vary, it will be based in deliberate and thoughtful decisions that also consider future consequences and adjustments to service levels to account for any near-term fluctuations.

### **Principle 8: The plan will address other state and federal laws and rules.**

In addition to the management mandates specific to Board of Forestry and Common School Lands, the Forest Management Plan will address compliance with other state and federal laws and rules including, but not limited to: the state and federal Endangered Species Acts; the Oregon Forest Practices Act; and cultural resource protection administered by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and coordinated with Indian tribes and the State Police.

### **Principle 9 – Diverse input from Oregonians and a variety of interested parties will be a high priority throughout planning processes.**

Understanding, acceptance, and support from stakeholder groups contributes to long-term success in managing State Forests. The Division is committed to open, equitable, and transparent stakeholder engagement processes. Additionally, counties within which we manage Board of Forestry lands have a statutorily established relationship with the Board through the Forest Trust Lands Advisory Committee (FTLAC). The Division provides accurate and timely information to ensure FTLAC has the information they need to advise the Board of Forestry and the State Forester.

The Department recognizes the importance and value of reaching out to Oregon's federally-recognized Tribes on issues related to managing Oregon's state forests. We will pursue opportunities to meet with Tribal Chairs, Councils and directors to listen and learn from the Tribes, seek opportunities for input and collaboration, and build relationships.

### **Principle 10 – The plan will examine opportunities to achieve goals through cooperative efforts with other agencies and units of local government, user groups, or organizations.**

Management objectives can often be achieved more effectively and efficiently through collaboration with others. Consultation and communication with other agencies and entities, including Counties, will be important to identify areas where ODF's efforts intersect with other state initiatives. These include but are not limited to: The Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds (OWEB); the Oregon Conservation Strategy (ODFW); the Oregon State Parks and Recreation's (OPRD) Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP); Federal and State sister agencies, and the State Historic Preservation Office's cultural and archaeological programs (OPRD).