

Board of Forestry Testimony

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The Resource Assessment Overview provided by ODF helps all Stakeholders understand the dynamics that affect land management and the associated management practices. After reviewing the information, I have three comments to make with some level of specificity.

- First, the Tillamook Forest is a good example of challenges and opportunities that land managers face on the North Coast. Our company owns about 90,000 acres in the same region; so we understand the challenges that ODF articulated as well as opportunities that exist.
 - Challenges of steep slopes, riparian areas, T&E species, underproductive alder stands, Swiss needle cast, and higher logging and young growth management expenses. These challenges do impact the return when compared to other State Forests; however the entire land base needs to be managed to optimize the long term productivity and return from the land. Active and focused land management mitigates many of the issues.
 - With these challenges come opportunities if actively managed by ODF. Conversion of underproductive (and lower value) lands should occur on a routine basis as part of the annual and longer term planning processes. Staff should be directed to create “shelf volume.” This shelf volume can be incremental to the normal plan volume. When market conditions are good, this volume can be added to the planned volume with minor impacts to profitability. This is a large opportunity and one that private industry routinely capitalizes on. In order to maximize the long term potential of the forest this needs to happen; if not, ODF is passing along a larger problem for future land managers and compromising long term viability to ODF and the Trust Counties.
- Secondly, ODF highlights a standing inventory of 16 billion board feet with 8 billion of inventory that is available for harvest. The inventory numbers (gross or available for harvest) continue to fluctuate over the time that I have been involved with the formation of the new FMP. This is very confusing and frustrating. It also points out the following need as testified to before.
 - The new FMP needs to generate sufficient income to support a standard and consistent Inventory Protocol. A suggested Protocol could be Annual Inventory Updates based upon sample cruising 10% of the land base each year and incorporating these results in the annual update. Of course the other elements of a standard inventory update would include annual depletion of harvest, annual growth and other adjustment such as measured site class, etc. Over a 10 year period the inventory would be fresh; not dated as it is now. Following an established protocol creates an inventory that ODF Staff, Foresters, Land Managers and all Stakeholders can have confidence in.
- Finally, the FMP needs to produce sufficient revenues to support fundamental activities on the forests such as pre-commercial thinning and all young growth management activities.

Submitted by W. Ray Jones

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