

# ODF Strategic Planning 2018-2019

Division: Private Forests

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS (2-5 year outlook)

### Summary Matrix

Initiative	Status (complete, continuing, revised, new)
Supporting Sustainable Family and Community Forestry	Continuing, Revised
Forest Practices Effectiveness for Water Quality, Forest Roads and Landslide Prone Areas	Continuing, Revised
Forest Products Harvest Tax	Recurring legislation

### Brief Overview of 2018-2019 Initiatives

#### Supporting Sustainable Family and Community Forestry

Bringing together rural and urban Oregonians through our forests is a key function of the Oregon Department of Forestry. Keeping those forests vibrant and healthy for wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, clean water, social value, economic value and so much more, takes technical expertise, particularly where forests meet communities.

This strategic initiative proposes new capacity to meet forestry challenges across ownerships and land uses in wildland/urban interface areas and communities. ODF field foresters will provide technical assistance to landowners and communities, deliver and administer incentive programs for clean water and sound forestry practices, implement the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds (Oregon Plan), promote voluntary conservation measures, address current and emerging invasive species problems, provide fire prevention and fuels reduction expertise, and administer the Forest Practices Act.

New capacity will enhance the ability of the Department of Forestry to respond to forest threats that impact family forestland owners and communities. The health of Oregon's forests are impacted by many current and potential threats. Perhaps the most imminent threat is from Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), a pest that has caused the removal of millions of trees in the Midwestern and Eastern US states in the last decade. Other forest threats impacting Oregon's family forestlands and community forests include loss of forestland through development, wildfire, and other invasive species.

The primary method of addressing these forest threats (wildfire, invasive species and forest fragmentation) is on-the-ground technical assistance and educational efforts. ODF field foresters will work directly with landowners, local governments, and non-profit organizations to address these threats. These actions will maintain healthy forests and the values forests provide for all Oregonians.

Adding this capacity would enhance the ability of the Department of Forestry to:

- Restore technical assistance levels impacted by reductions in federal funds.
- Fulfill current legislative mandates for urban forestry assistance, rural forestry assistance, fire prevention, and fire suppression.

- Provide land use coordination assistance at a multi-jurisdictional level.
- Help cities and forest landowners prepare for Emerald Ash Borer and other invasive species.
- Promote green infrastructure solutions as an approach to managing storm water and reducing local flooding
- Provide the capacity to address issues affecting the sustainability of family forestlands in Oregon.
- Provide one-on-one technical assistance, delivery, and administration of incentives for fire and forest management programs, implement the Oregon Plan, and administer the Forest Practices Act.
- Implement priority, landscape-based, issue-oriented sources of incentive financial assistance dollars.
- Expand the agency's capacity to administer the Forest Practices Act on family forestlands through more focused outreach and education, especially in the wildland-urban interface areas.
- Provide additional capacity in the complete and coordinated fire militia.

#### **Forest Practices Effectiveness for Water Quality, Forest Roads and Landslide Prone Areas**

The Department provides a one-stop regulatory approach for forest practices on non-federal lands; we implement the federal Clean Water Act standards, fill and removal requirements, laws related to forest road construction and maintenance, and rules protecting water quality and public safety associated with shallow rapidly moving landslides. The department relies on a three-pronged approach to its relationship with forest landowners and operators to ensure the FPA is properly implemented on the ground: education, engineering (in the form of technical assistance), and failing these first two items, enforcement. The availability of specialists in critical areas such as forest roads and landslide prone terrain is a key part of education and technical assistance delivery.

The FPA specifically highlights monitoring in areas of water quality, streamside forests, pesticide use and landslides and public safety at operational and watershed scales. The proposal would provide resources to meet statutory requirements for resources to address scientific and policy issues related to water quality, roads (including legacy roads) and landslide prone terrain in forested landscapes. Information gained from monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of FPA statutes and rules are key drivers for the development of new policies and regulations. The availability of technical specialists to help guide new policy development is currently limited in the Private Forests and State Forests programs in the arenas of forest roads and landslide prone terrain.

The proposed action advances the agency's mission of maintaining working forests and the social, economic and ecological viability of those forests into the future. The proposed package enhances capacity to ensure the implementation and effectiveness of the FPA through field and policy support in conjunction with the design and implementation of monitoring projects as prioritized in the Private Forests monitoring strategy. As part of the proposed actions, additional positions will provide road engineering and geotechnical leadership for department field units, managers, and forest landowners and operators and serve as the primary source of technical and policy information on forest harvesting, road construction and maintenance, treatment of slash, landslides and public safety, earth surface processes, hydrology, hydraulics, and other forest engineering and geotechnical issues.

Program Operations - Proposed positions will provide technical guidance to field units, Department managers, legislators, other agencies, forest landowners and operators, etc., on forest engineering and geotechnical issues through:

- Conducting technical assessments of road construction, maintenance and conditions, landslides and slope stability, soil erosion, water quality, and watershed protection hazards and evaluates risks to natural resources and public safety.
- Investigating landslides, road construction and maintenance, harvest system plans, soil erosion, sediment, hydrology, and earth-surface-process issues; and prepares technical reports on investigations.
- Monitoring rules and practices related to harvesting, road construction, and road maintenance, treatment of slash, and landslides and public safety for application consistency throughout the state.
- In coordination with both Private Forests and State Forests staff, lead the development of research and monitoring efforts related to roads, ground-disturbing practices, and landslides through the development and review of methodologies, oversight of data collection, data analysis, and report development.

#### **Forest Products Harvest Tax**

Establishes the Forest Products Harvest Tax (FPHT) rate for the next biennium is a routine part of the agency budget. The FPHT supports administration of the Oregon Forest Practices Act, professional education at the Oregon State University College of Forestry, and professional forestry education at the College.

The FPHT is levied on a per-thousand-board-feet basis when timber is harvested on public and private lands. Specific segments of the tax fund a variety of services, including the Department's fire protection program, operation of the Oregon Forest Resources Institute, Oregon State University forestry programs, and the Department's implementation of the Forest Practices Act.

This concept amends ORS 321.015 to set the rates for the segments of the tax related to the Forest Practices Act and OSU functions. Rates for other segments of the tax are addressed elsewhere in statute or in the budget development process. Harvest rates to support Forest Practices Act functions are calculated considering three factors: the current biennium's ending balance, forecasted harvest levels for the next two years, and projected requirements for the next biennium

The Forest Practices Act is a cornerstone of natural resource protection in Oregon, requiring post-harvest reforestation, streamside buffers and other measures to ensure sound forest management. When combined with public funds, use of harvest tax dollars for Forest Practices Act administration maintains the concept of shared responsibility, among landowners and the general public, for forest practices enforcement and services on private land. This cost-sharing acknowledges that healthy private forests provide public benefits, such as timber production, jobs, clean water and wildlife habitat.

## **BOARD WORK PLAN ITEMS**

- Ripstream Analysis and Results
- Eastern Oregon/Siskiyou Riparian Protection Review
- Specified Resource Sites Rule Analysis for Marbled Murrelets
- Specified Resource Site Policy Review
- Cable Assist Logging BMP Review
- HB3013 Wildlife Food Plots rulemaking