

Proposed property access methods for compliance monitoring projects

The following outline of methods is designed to gain landowner cooperation and minimize nonresponse. Detailed below are methods for public outreach, a description of stewardship forester involvement, and an overview of a plan for involving landowners in the riparian pilot study. Finally, a description of the warrant process is included to reference in the case of landowner non-response or refusal to participate in the study.

Promote public awareness and acceptance of compliance monitoring as a normal part of ODF operations (January-June).

- Create/edit 1-pager describing the compliance monitoring projects, desired objectives, and benefits to the landowner, appealing to values (e.g., stewardship, sustainability, community, legacy, aesthetics, collaboration) accruing from the projects.
 - Expected benefits include improved public perception, HCP protections, clarification of rules, improved service delivery, reduced pressure for further-changes to rules.
 - 1-pager will provide talking points used in other outreach efforts.
 - Consultation with the ODF Training Unit regarding messaging may be useful here.
- Create press release to be distributed by Public Affairs to normal outlets.
 - Timing of this and other outreach methods?
- Have Public Affairs create Facebook post.
- Create newsletter?
 - Mass mailing/emailing
 - What mailing list? All FERNS contacts?
- Ads?
- Presentations on riparian pilot study importance and landowner cooperation
 - OSWA, Tree Farm, Regional Forest Practices Committees, Committee for Family Forestlands, OSU Extension foresters? etc.

Prepare contact materials for landowners (Jan-March)

- Letters, with blank fields left open for owner-specific information.
- Determine right tone for letters (permission request vs. authority to be on land)
 - Start with revised stewardship forester manual
 - Adapt procedures to account for the fact that we are not local.
 - Keep select current stewardship foresters in loop.

After drawing oversample (Jan-early April), consult with Stewardship Foresters

- Special methods needed for specific landowners
 - Direct Stewardship Forester Contact (phone call)
 - Identify landowners unlikely to get on board

- May affect statistical validity of any follow-up analysis of landowner response characteristics.

Contact landowners in oversample (April-June)

- Two letters (with reminders), followed by direct contact (phone/email), finally a letter warning of potential administrative warrant.
 - 10-day spacing
 - Participation legally required, so probably cannot offer confidentiality of CA findings on unit. Could be beneficial to attain updated DOJ information on confidentiality impacts of 1501 and authority to access.
 - Follow-up with study of landowner response characteristics
 - If we implement, will impose additional constraints on the methods we use.
- Letter 1: Initial landowner outreach
 - Postal and email (if available)
 - Includes access packet
 - “consent form”
 - Operation information form
 - Access requirements explanation
 - Self addressed stamped envelope (SASE)
 - QR code allowing for electronic response
 - Cover letter addresses why study findings are important to landowner
 - Signed by upper management
 - Salutation by first name
 - Personalized heading
 - Variation in how people like to be addressed.
 - Options seem to be first name, full name, or “landowner”
 - Thank you/reminder letter after 10 days
- Letter 2: Follow-up with nonrespondents
 - Occurs 10 days after previous reminder letter
 - Emphasis on asking for landowner cooperation and describing why participation is important to ODF.
 - Also includes “permission” packet with SASE and QR code
 - Thank you/reminder letter after 10 days
- Direct outreach to remaining nonrespondents
 - Phone call 10 days after previous reminder letter
 - Need to decide whether we’ll be performing statistical analysis of nonresponse characteristics.
 - If yes, then callers will need to follow script exactly
 - If not, more leeway for conversations
 - If possible, alter caller ID to say “Oregon Department of Forestry”
 - 3 contact attempts made
 - Calls made, I believe, on separate days
 - Email, call as a possible alternative
- Letter 3: Warning letter

- Cover letter describing statutory access requirement and warning of administrative warrant. This warning letter would also need to be sent to those who deny consent for land access.
- Includes “permission” packet with SASE and QR code
- Ten days allowed for response

Warrant Process

SB 1501 and resulting Forest Practices Rules give authority for ODF to access forest operations for compliance monitoring purposes. It is highly desirable for public perception and worker safety to obtain landowner cooperation prior to accessing property. Administrative warrants are considered a last resort.

More on this to come as we consult with ODF staff.