

# Oregon State Stewardship Coordinating Committee Online Meeting

August 30, 2019 - Oregon Dept. of Forestry, 2600 State Street, Santiam Room, Building D Salem Oregon

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**Members Attending:**

Eric Williams (for Eric Hartstein),  
OWEB  
Carrie Berger (for Jim Johnson), OSU  
Extension  
Kristin Kovalik, TPL  
Andrew Owen, NRCS  
Clint Bentz, Forestland Owner  
Rod Krahmer, ODFW  
Janelle Geddes, USFS S&P Forestry  
Karl Dalla Rosa, USFS S&P Forestry  
Kelley Beamer, COLT  
Morgan Holen, OR Community Trees  
CalLee Davenport, USF&W  
Jim James, OSWA  
Rex Storm, OTFS/AOL

**ODF Staff:**

Josh Barnard, Deputy Chief Private  
Forests (Acting Chair)  
Susan Dominique, Admin. Support  
Amy Singh, Forest Legacy Coordinator  
Ryan Gordon, Family Forestlands  
Coord.  
Nate Agalzoff, Incentives Coordinator

**Guests:**

(none)

**Absent:**

Jon Weck, Landowner  
Dick Courter, Consultant  
Nelson Mathews, TPL  
Richard Corff (replacing Owen  
Wozniak)  
Seth Barnes, OFIC  
Gary Jensen, OSWCC  
Taylor Murray, USDA  
Kyle Abraham, SSCC Chair, Private  
Forests Chief  
Dan Logan, Landowner

Draft Minutes

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**Call to Order; Introductions and Public Comment**

Josh Barnard opened the call standing in for Kyle Abraham and did a roll call of participants on the call and those in person to verify quorum. Public comment was invited but none was offered.

**Review and Ranking of Forest Legacy Program FY2021 Applications**

Singh began the review of the Forest Legacy Program FY2021 applications thanking members and alternates for their willingness to join in the meeting as quorum was needed for any recommendations. She welcomed everyone's opinions and input to help inform the discussion. The four potential Forest Legacy applications that we have received for the Federal FY2021 application cycle for Forest Legacy Program are: China Mountain Project, Spence Mountain Project, Arch Cape Community Forest and Hood River Fish and Forest Project. She reiterated that only 3 projects can be submitted to the Forest Service from each State and with no more than a combined total of \$10 million dollars. Any single project cannot exceed \$7 million. She suggested that members not concern themselves with the asks in the initial discussion. Applicants were informed to remain flexible in the process and consider how to phase their projects over multiple cycles if limited funding was available. After the Committee's recommendation on who to forward on to the Forest Service Program Managers from the Western Region for their review. Singh reported getting scores from 8 of the Committee members. The Oregon process mimics the Forest Service Legacy National review process where reviewers come up with rating scores to fuel their discussions and ranking decisions. She noted that Arch Cape Community Forest Project and Hood River Forest and Fish Projects have had more time to finesse their applications have submitted in the past whereas China Mountain and Spence Mountain projects are new to the application process.

She wanted to note that she connected with the Forest Legacy Program Manager in Washington, D.C. to get insight on the funding list for FY2020. Hood River was in a strong position for \$5 million and Arch Cape's application is uncertain but still on the list for \$1 million dollars. I did connect with the Forest Legacy Program Manager in the Washington office, the Washington D.C. office, tried to give some insight about the FY2020 budget. So as I mentioned at our last meeting, for those that were there for those that are new, Hood River has a really strong position to get funding in the 2020 budget for \$5 million dollars and Arch Cape is in a little bit of a tricky place second to last on that list for \$1 million dollars. She hopes to hear more by the fall. Nothing was considered official until the Federal Budget comes out. Opening the discussion Singh solicited comments on each project. Krahmer suggested using ranking scores rather than relative scores because of the extreme variability of the relative scores can have a big influence. Storm noted his scores

were absent in the tally and provided them verbally. She averaged out the scores and noted that 2 members had Spence Mountain as their top and 4 people had Hood River as their top. 2 members had China Mountain topped but each of them had those projects as the last as well. She observed that phased projects previously awarded or in the ranking for FY2020 may be viewed more favorably, as those projects have some traction with the National reviewers. She thought it safe to assume that Hood River and Arch Cape would be obvious recommendations as they have already ranked nationally. If so, there is only an opportunity for 1 of the 2 remaining applicants to move forward. So saying she cautioned that the Committee shouldn't submit any project that isn't ready or worthy of receiving funding.

Beamer voiced some support for the Spence Mountain project as it had been considered previously and encouraged to create more community support and return in this fiscal cycle. She thought that proposal came back in a really robust form, showing community support and recognizing its importance locally. Then she asked if the other projects could be scaled back in their ask, or phased to allow funding in Spence Mountain's short time frame. Singh agreed there is some flexibility within the process to do that. Kraemer offered that the Committee has got demonstrated winners with Hood River and Arch Cape to some extent but nonetheless waits in the docket for actual funding at the National Level. He personally would hate to jeopardize those. Owen inquired whether looking at the scoring for each requirement would easily identify where a project is lacking and tease out what factors aren't adequately addressed. Singh shared that "Threatened" factors are generally the one category that projects score the lowest at. She explained that part of it is telling a story in a way that the project goals mitigate the Threats. At this point in the discussion Amy noted for the benefit of new members that the applications are limited in the number of bullets, and characters the application can have so sometimes the story gets a little lost. She emphasized one common theme is that all of our recommended projects find a way to make their stories shine in a way that hopefully connects with the readers. Williams thought the Importance category looking at economic factors was really hard to score because information was county or region-wide and didn't address the importance of the particular property and pointing to more practical considerations about readiness and about the State positioning to get as much of the federal funds as possible. Singh responded that she will work with applicants between now and November to ensure that what we are telling the Forest Service is an accurate reflection of where the project is in terms of readiness. And hoped that whatever project is not forwarded doesn't go away, but makes use of the time to refine and strengthen their application for the next funding cycle. Storm asked for clarification on the purpose of the scoring and the score's relevance to the selection process especially when a recommendation is contrary to the scoring results. Amy explained that the purpose of doing this scoring is to align our process with the federal process. The ones we decide to submit, those scores can help identify where improvement is needed to make the projects more attractive. So it's not about ignoring the numbers in any way. They are a tool to inform the discussion.

Regarding the discussion on scoring Holen noted that China Mountain ranked very high in terms of our average numbers and Arch Cape substantially lower and she recognized the feeling of obligation to forward Arch Cape but their current application is different than last year. The total ask and the project costs have increased and if you look at it the value of it per acre it's substantially higher than any of these other projects. Singh explained the changes were based upon feedback they had gotten, the changes were strategic to help tell the story but costs did increase. Beamer spoke in support of the Arch Cape Community Forest having toured the site and left impressed by the multifaceted goals. But she wasn't sure the goals transferred well into the brief application format. Singh shared that sometimes a project just isn't a good fit for Forest Legacy but this project had gained some attention nationally.

Beamer had a question about China Mountain and the plan by the Conservation Fund to buy it prior to the Legacy timeline and how that affected the application process. The purchase actually may buy some time for the project to re-apply next cycle. But there are no guarantees that the Fund winds up selling to something that is counter to the stated conservation goals in the long run. Bentz asked about Weyerhaeuser's commitment to the Hood River Project, with providing the required match. And whether as industrial landowners they would entertain the possibility of accepting less than fair value as part of the match. Singh noted that scenario is an option on the table which will become clearer

once the appraisal value is determined. But nothing has been finalized. Member asked where the Hood River Project ranked federally. Singh reported that on the “unofficial ranking list” it came in as 11<sup>th</sup> quite an amazing accomplishment.

Barnard called for a motion and initial vote to see if there was some consensus among members. Singh emphasized avoiding number crunching at this point as it better to be considered flexible rather than binding. So any recommendations to the State can be free and clear of any dollar values. At that point there were opinions back and forth about the projects ranking. Before signing off the call Beamer shared that she would want to advance Arch Cape because of its significance on the North Coast and proven success federally. Then Hood River.

James asked for clarity on the urgency on China Mountain as he interpreted there may be a little more time on that one that we perhaps we don't have on the others. Singh surmised that part of the urgency with the other projects is just riding the momentum of existing funding. Kraemer supported Hood River, Arch Cape and Spence Mountain moving forward. Storm commented that they should consider the tallies of the scoring that had been submitted and that the Forest Legacy Program has 8 well defined attributes of importance that the scoring is tied to and should influence the vote. As such he did not score Arch Cape well on at least half of those attributes. He felt that the other 3 projects have greater merit, importance, reflected in the scores and a better use of Forest Legacy dollars. If the projects don't score well but still are forwarded, he wondered on what basis or through what influence?

Steering the discussion back to the meeting time restraints he noted that he heard a recommendation for the Spence Mountain Project, Hood River Forest and Fish and Arch Cape Community Forest. Owen seconded that motion. Barnard did a roll call of remaining voting members and their agreement. 5 voted not in agreement, 4 in agreement, 1 abstained. The first Motion did not pass. Barnard asked if there was an alternative motion. Kraemer motioned that the Committee should advance Hood River, Arch Cape and China Mountain. There was not a second of that motion. At somewhat of a stalemate Singh explained that as there wasn't a decisive vote all voting members could vote by email, but *every one* of the members must respond. Clarifying that Beamer had motioned for Spence Mountain, Hood River and Arch Cape before she signed off but the vote could not be accepted because her 'vote' was no longer available on the conference call so they would have to re-vote on that Motion. Singh cautioned that the first deadline for Forest Service Review through the Western States is September 20<sup>th</sup>. Her hope was to have some time to get the projects cleaned up and including in any feedback from today's discussion so she needed the vote to conclude as soon as possible. Bentz suggested including China Mountain, Spence Mountain and Hood River be added to the vote choices. Berger seconded that. Singh would work on a speedy turnaround for the email response. Asked whether project partners are part of the voting, Gordon assured the group that project partner/members would count towards quorum but should still respond to officially abstain from the vote.

### **Round Table – Partner Updates and Closing Comments**

Before adjourning Gordon announced that a poll would be sent out with the terms of the next meeting. He shared that he saw the agenda could include revisiting the Committee Charter and purpose. Coming up to speed on previous Legacy projects and reconnecting on the Forest Action Plan.

Barnard hearing no additional partner comments for the Good of the Order so thanked the members for their time and adjourned the meeting.