

State Forests Advisory Committee Meeting
Friday, April 4th, 2008
MEETING SUMMARY¹

Members Present: Jill Bradford, Mike Bordelon, Todd Reinwald, Paul Johnson, Phil Cogswell, Ginny Van Loo, Bud Henderson, Ed Kamholz, Dave Kunert, Rex Storm, Barbara Lee (for Nancy Hirsch), Wayne Naillon, Carolyn Eady, and Barrett Brown.

Others Present: Andy White, Tom Savage, Gregg Cline, Dan Goody, Jenny Laughman, Chris Jarmer, Mike Totey, Jeff Foreman, Clark Seely, Ross Holloway, Doug Decker, Mike Kroon, Robyn Biesecker, Erik Marcy, Wayne Auble, Laurie O’Nion, and Barbara Moore.

Members Absent: Nancy Willmes, Nancy Hirsch, Mike Wilson, and Matthew Betts.

Public Comment: None Given.

Meeting Summary Approval: One grammatical change noted from Mike Bordelon.

Housekeeping:

Personnel Changes – Nancy Hirsch has been appointed to the position of Division Chief for State Forests and Jim Paul has moved to the position of Division Chief for Private Forests. Andy White is currently the acting DF for Forest Grove and Tillamook Districts while Bob Gustavson is on leave.

SFAC Work Plan – Per the meeting notes from 03-07-08, will look at topics requested and meet with DF’s and program staff to determine priorities and look at establishing agenda topics in advance for several future meetings similar to the two-year work plans that were used in the early years of SFAC. Barrett reminded that the committee is to provide input to ODF as requested on topics that are timely and significant. Ginny would appreciate if agendas were less reactive. Carolyn would like to ensure that there remains opportunity for members to bring forward input on topics they feel are of value for meetings.

BOF and State Forests Updates:

Dan Goody brought information on the Clatsop and Tillamook State Forest strategies process. Districts have made significant progress on the imputation of Stand Level Inventory (SLI) and the development of new Growth and Yield Tables. Proposed refinements into the algorithm used to define stand types. It appears that the algorithm works better for Doug-fir only stands than for mixed conifer stands. This is resulting in finding more complex structure on the forest than previously thought. Mike Bordelon

¹ Meeting Summary reflects key issues, discussions and decisions, not verbatim language.

stated that the information from this workgroup will provide data for the BOF to weigh in making a decision of where to go with the FMP. The imputation of data is done for two of the districts. The model has not yet run this data. Dan provided information on what imputation involves. Dr. Sessions will perform the early runs himself until the modeling position in Salem staff is hired. All types of stands are being inventoried to give a better picture to the districts of what is actually on the forest.

Salvage Progress on the Astoria District:

The district has moved quickly to assess the damage and set up salvage sales. The first sale is in Salem and sells Apr. 29th (3.5 million board feet). More sales will go to Salem by July with the total board feet totaling about 35 million. The plan is to replace three of the planned sales in the FY09 AOP with salvage sales however; this does not replace volume for volume. There is an additional 4 to 5 million board feet of additional volume. The salvage value of the timber will not be comparable due to higher logging costs of blow down and the current market for timber. Dave Kunert asked how close the district came to the blow-down estimates for the FY06 sales and Dan answered that the district was "pretty close" i.e. within 20% in most cases. Barrett asked why the IP ranges matter in a catastrophic event. Dan Goody answered that nature decided where the clear-cuts are located and how the remaining forest inventory is affected because the districts need to maintain sustainable harvest levels, however; the districts will do what needs to be done to salvage the downed wood regardless of the IP ranges. Bud Henderson asked about how much the salvage sales increased the clear-cut acres above the planned acres for FY09. The increase is about 2000 acres above what was planned. There will likely have to be an IP modification done to accommodate these additional acres. Phil asked about watershed implications from the storm. Liz Dent was brought out and will assist the districts in writing riparian strategies into the sales.

Salvage Progress on the Tillamook and Forest Grove Districts:

Andy White gave a short talk about what is happening in the districts. The extent of blow-down on the districts is much less than that which the Astoria district experienced. A large portion is within the God's Valley area. This is resulting in some T&E issues regarding Marbled Murrelet Management Areas (MMMA). The total amount of blow down will likely be less than 15 million board feet.

Follow-Up on the Recreation Assessment Action Plan:

Ross Holloway reviewed the progress to date. Step one of the group was to provide an analysis of the 15 key findings. The shorter of the two-documents clarified the findings. Following that, the group designed the action plan which spells out the steps ODF plans to take to aid in the successful future of the recreation program on State Forests. Subsequently, the project group has met with all the recreation staff, TFC, South Fork, HR, etc. to gather feedback.

SFAC Comments on the Project Team Analysis of Findings –

Barrett Brown: Feels the workgroup did an excellent job of consolidating the findings and filtering out the most useful of findings.

Carolyn Eady: Agrees it is a good synopsis.

Rex Storm: Is concerned with the strategic policy direction for the recreation program. There is no strategic mention of who pays for the recreation program. Any mention of funding sources is glaringly overlooked. Ross answered this will be a key discussion point for talks with the BOF and others.

Ed Kamholz: Feels the assessment addresses how fragmented the process is. Has thought gone into centralizing the planning? Ross gave the example of SNC. Yes, the idea is to strategically plan at a higher level and then address the forest by forest issues locally.

Wayne Naillon: Agrees that there should be a statewide planning coordinator. He feels that the assessment exaggerates the fragmentation.

Ginny Van Loo: She would like to see specifics identified for forests throughout the state that are all the same. Examples are roads treatment, garbage, fee structures. She feels that ODF should not have to start from scratch but look to what other agencies have done such as State Parks and the Counties and incorporate that information into the strategic planning process.

Phil Cogswell: He noticed there did not seem to be much in the analysis about coordinating with other state or public agencies. He agrees that there should be statewide coordination.

Ross answered that the agency does have a statewide coordinator, John Barnes. We do try to coordinate with other agencies, especially state parks.

SFAC Comments on the Action Plan –

Wayne Naillon: Is happy to see a recreation plan for the Elliott State Forest.

Phil asked if the group will have a chance to review the plan as it develops. Yes.

Category 1 – Strategic Direction:

Carolyn Eady asked what the strategic visioning process looks like. The group received this paper at the last meeting. Ross will make sure the committee will get it electronically. It is a seven step process. She also asked that the program policy section recognizes the unique challenges of each individual district.

Category 2 – Planning:

Ginny Van Loo asked if a comprehensive recreation management plan has been done before. There are two districts (West Oregon and Western Lane) that have not developed recreation management plans. We are tasked with completing these within the first 10 years of the implementation of the FMP.

Carolyn Eady agrees that the recreation plans need updated. She feels that the Clatsop County commissioners will ask the department to work with the Clatsop County Planning and Recreation Advisory Committee.

Category 3 – Standards:

Barrett suggests that the department waits to see what the Universal Trail Assessment Protocol looks like before they adopt the system.

Ginny Van Loo suggests that the department look at Parks and the Forest Service in developing a permit system.

Category 4 – Workforce Organization and Capacity:

This is the recreation program personnel focused area. The agency is looking at the question, “Are there areas where employees should be allowed to issue citations under the public use rules?”

Wayne Naillon feels the Tillamook trail patrol showcases the fragmentation across districts because they are only allowed to patrol the eastern portion of the Tillamook State Forest that is in the Forest Grove District.

Ginny Van Loo asked about citation authority through the legislature. The State Forester has the authority to certify employees under the public use rules but it was not the intent of the agency at the time the authority was granted to use employees to issue citations. We have coordination with county deputies and the ATV fund provides 50% of the dollars to pay for their time. Only fire wardens in the fire program have the ability to issue citations at this time.

Carolyn Eady wants to recognize the overhead utilized through the volunteer program. It varies greatly from district to district.

Barrett Brown commented on the high value of adding language to management employee’s position descriptions regarding their duties in the recreation program. This is an important step in gaining leverage for the program. He also feels that the Washington County Sheriff’s department should be embarrassed by their lack of participation in enforcement on the Washington County portion of the Tillamook State Forest.

Category 5 – Business Management:

Carolyn Eady commented on the challenge of creating a self-supporting recreation program. Will the department look at the risk management of using a volunteer labor force? Yes. She asked that the program share this information with other recreation entities.

Barrett Brown suggests adding MOU's for volunteers and equipment to free up the supervision requirements of staff. There are probably best practices collections of information available from other agencies.

Category 6 and 7 – Communications and Monitoring:

The TFC staff brought up that the department has a need for consistency in the standards for signage and pamphlets earlier this morning. Agency Affairs is working on this. It was also noted that internal communications need more emphasis. The next draft of the action plan will flow better.

Barrett Brown feels that communication and monitoring efforts should focus on public awareness of the Greatest Permanent Value concept, and on measuring public satisfaction with recreation programs. In many areas, the increase in the number of users and diversity of public interests has outpaced planning efforts and management capacity. Until this gap improves, public marketing efforts that promote these recreation opportunities should receive less emphasis.

Carolyn Eady feels that the department should take the recreation information off of the ODF website and place it on its own site for ease of use.

ODF Revenue Outlook for 2008-2011:

Clark Seely provided a PowerPoint presentation on the revenue outlook for ODF from current through 2011. Agency revenues are of concern for the near and distant future. Handouts were distributed and are available on request for those who would like them. The department will keep the committee updated as the budgeting process progresses.

FY09 Annual Operations Plans (AOP) Review:

Phil reminded that providing comments on the AOPs is one of the main duties of SFAC. He reminded the committee to try to provide answers to the key questions provided by ODF at the March meeting. Todd briefly covered the number of comments each of the six districts received. West Oregon and North Cascade did not receive any public comments. Phil divided the committee into three groups for breakout sessions. ODF field representatives divided themselves among the groups to answer questions as they came

up during the group breakout discussions. Mike Bordelon, Todd Reinwald, and Tom Savage facilitated the three groups.

Breakout Session Reports –

Group 1 (Wayne Naillon, Rex Storm and Ed Kamholz):

Question 1:

- ODF has done a better job than in the past of balancing the social, economic, and environmental focuses in the AOP.
- The language and communication has become more understandable for layman participants.
- Commendations to the department for improving the focus of added management actions that address recreation and public outreach.
- A suggestion was made to increase the amount of FICC's and South Fork crews that are dedicated to trail work.
- Recreation is an increasing part of Oregon's economy and State Forest recreation management should also be increasing.
- The recreation program needs additional standards that are both measurable and quantifiable.
- There may not be an equitable balance on the social emphasis of GPV (recreation) due to the increasing emphasis on the environmental and economic benefits generated through timber harvest and the resulting revenues to the counties.
- Policies and standards for habitat, species of concern, and water provide for an inequitable pre-eminence over social and economic outputs.

Question 2:

- The agency has overachieved timber volume while under-achieving recreational objectives.
- Ensure State Forests are managed in a way that makes sense; and in a way that retains "public license to manage" State Forests.
- ODF often meets harvest goals but often does not achieve recreational goals.
- County governments have revenue expectation from State Forests. FMP must balance and accomplish this revenue while also maintaining environmental objectives. This is the social contract to actively manage the forests.
- AOP for Tillamook district does not sufficiently address the transportation planning challenges for that district nor does it address how the projects are progressing toward the goals of the FMP. A suggestion was made to revise the IP and provide future AOP explanations of the Tillamook District's unique challenges regarding transportation progress, issues, and problems.
- Tillamook District AOP (and possibly the Astoria District AOP) does not address the impacts of the 2006 and 2007 storms and how they affect the IP and AOP.

Question 3:

- Pleased with the Forest Grove District's recreation progress to construct projects and other districts could follow this model. However, this comment is biased as the Forest Grove District is the district of greatest attention and recreation work for PUMP. PUMP loves the Forest Grove District's recreation program.
- Accomplishment numbers reported in the AOP's which have a wide variance from the IP objectives should have an explanation in the AOP to explain the variance. Revise the IP if necessary. It is better to revise the IP now rather than to wait until the 10 year review to justify why the 10 year sum is far different from the IP's 10 year goal.
 - For example; the Tillamook road construction, road improvement, roads vacated and total Tillamook road miles.
 - Change IP now to reflect adaptive management strategies.

Group 2 (Carolyn Eady, Dave Kunert and Paul Johnson):

This group did not directly address the questions in order so the bullets reflect comments on all the categories.

- There is a concern over the increase in clear-cut acres overshooting the IP range due to high levels of clear-cuts in the past years and recent storm/wind-throw events.
- Concern was expressed about overstocked stands in the Jewell area and the fire hazards these closed single canopy stands with smaller diameter trees present.
- What harvest level is sustainable given the current inventory information? Are the current levels keeping up with the growth increments of the forests? One member thought the agency could get more volume than previously thought and another member thought the current level presents a challenge to stay within the limits.
- One member would like clarification that the current AOP's are within the sideboards of the present FMP and IP ranges. The IP's have evolved over the years so that the levels are quite different from when the plans were adopted.
- A question was presented that asked for the reasons on the higher net present value for the Forest Grove District versus the Astoria District. It occurs to the group that transportation/proximity may play a role in this and the stands in the Forest Grove District provide more pole material and that the Douglas fir stands have a higher value than the mixed stands in the Astoria District.
- A question was presented on the hardwood values and the percentage of forest component. It was explained that the percentages for Astoria District are the numbers from the time the FMP was adopted and may not reflect accurate composition percentages, whereas the Tillamook District has recently updated their hardwood inventory numbers. Forest Grove is actually growing some Red Alder stands.
- There are relatively fewer acres of vegetation management activities planned in Tillamook (TL 50 acres versus FG's 350 acres). Is Tillamook conducting

enough release. Some districts count this in the site prep while others count this as release. This results in a variation of the acreage numbers between AOP's. Can we report this type of activity more uniformly across the district's AOP's? There needs to be realistic values and objectives to meet the DFC targets.

- There was a concern that the invasive species control and noxious weed treatment is not sufficient.
- A question was raised about the "Headwater Amphibian Research" being conducted on the Forest Grove District with OSU. This was explained within the discussion.
- Some discussion took place regarding using DFC as the primary driver for stand prescriptions. It was identified that there is a need for updates and revision for the landscape design plans using the correct information gained over the past several years. It would lend acceptance and credibility to the planning processes.

Group 3 (Barrett Brown, Bud Henderson, and Ginny Van Loo):

Question 1:

- This group generally feels that the AOP's achieve sufficient contributions toward the social, economic and environmental values as described by the GPV rule and the FMP.
- Are the regeneration acre ranges in the IP "out the window" for the Tillamook and Astoria districts due to the recent storms and wind throw? It was explained that the planned acres were decreased as the districts incorporated the blow down.
- Will clear-cut acres in the Astoria District be above the IP range? This was also a question for the Tillamook District AOP.
- The range of road building can be exceeded but the replacement of sales with salvage sales may lower the miles of road construction.
- Will the timber value be the same in the Astoria District due to incorporation of salvage sales?

Question 2:

- How is the DFC adjusted due to storm damage? It is not because the plan is adjustable and moves around the landscape.
- Some members were happy to see larger areas of regeneration stands because it changes the DFC of the stands from what it was before.
- The group feels that the timber harvesting objectives are being met but some questioned whether using the mid-point of the range was adequate to achieve the annual harvest objectives. They would like to hear what the BOF says on this issue.
- Satisfied with recreation objectives. The motorized interests groups are interested in having participation earlier in the planning process. Without the recreation assessment process in place, the group might have concern.

- Does fertilization contribute to DFC? Has an economic cost/benefit analysis been done? This was answered in the affirmative during the discussion. Fertilization is an almost straightforward calculation and almost all is in the Forest Grove District.
- The group encourages the agency to continue to fight for other forest management activities even though budget times are tough. Continue with positive return investments.

Question 3:

- FEMA projects at times conflict with plan objectives. An example is the plan to recover a lost trail (OHV). Money will not be there due to FEMA projects. ODF needs to assess the costs to recover this trail and include it in the AOP's despite FEMA's unwillingness to cover this cost.
- Will the final version of the AOP's be within the IP range for the Astoria District once they replace planned sales with salvage sales?
- How do districts deal with catastrophic events that force them to harvest or build roads in excess of their IP ranges?

Roundtable Discussion -

The group then discussed ways to improve the documentation and presentation of the AOP's in order to enhance the understanding of the materials.

- There has been a noticeable improvement in the way the AOP information is presented to SFAC.
- The agency uses too many acronyms.
- Continue having district presentations to provide operation specific information at the first SFAC meeting of the year prior to the AOP review meeting.
- It would be helpful to have more facilitation in answering the questions the agency would like answered. The groups can tend to get off track. The questions tend to be tough for the committee members to address.
- If the committee continues with the breakout group process of review, it is important to have district staff continue to participate with the groups.

Wrap-up –

Todd covered the process on how the comments from the committee will be addressed and the timeframe for approving the AOP's and posting the responses on the website.

Subsequent to this meeting, the SFAC tour dates have been scheduled for July 17th and 18th, 2008. The fall meetings have been scheduled for September 26th and December 5th, 2008.