

**Committee for Family Forestlands  
Minutes  
June 26, 2008**

A meeting of the Committee for Family Forestlands (CFF) was held in the Santiam Room at ODF's Salem compound.

*Committee members present:*

Gary Springer	Brad Withrow-Robinson
Bill Arsenault	Rex Storm
Sarah Deumling	Craig Shinn
Mike Cloughesy	

*Committee members absent:*

Greg Miller	Ned Livingston
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*Staff present:*

Peter Daugherty	Jim Paul
Julie Welp	Jo Morgan
Kevin Weeks	

*Guests present:*

Kristin Kovalik, Trust for Public Lands

**Agenda Items:**

1. Review of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Conservation Easements
4. Forward Agenda
5. Oregon Plan Voluntary Measures
6. Update on Private Forests' Budget
7. Communications/Other Business

**Approve minutes from May 22, 2008**

The minutes were approved with corrections.

**Board of Forestry and Private Forests Program**

At the last BOF work meeting, Private Forests Program staff pointed out that the Forest Regulation Work Plan needs to be updated. We want to edit it and rewrite it as the Private Forests Work Plan. The Board wants an outline of the proposal rather than a draft. This project will begin a shift in how Private Forests does business. The program has been more about regulations than incentives, so this plan update gives us an opportunity to focus on incentives for resource protection on private lands, something we've long talked about but haven't advanced very far.

Also, at the next Board of Forestry meeting, the department will present to the Board an update of the work of the Committee for Family Forestlands. It will cover various issues of concern and the group's recommendations on them. Specifically, this is a good opportunity to discuss the Family Forestlands Symposium and make

recommendations on the topics that need to take a high priority in the Private Forests Work Plan.

### Conservation Easements

Peter summarized discussions on this topic from previous meetings. Is this something the Private Forests Program should be engaged in? Through default, we've already been given this responsibility through the federal forest legacy program. That program focuses on larger parcels, as do many conservation organizations. The BPA is a potential source of funds for family forestland conservation easements in the Willamette Valley. There is a place for ODF to become a holder of conservation easements, particular of smaller parcels. We could also be possible facilitators or a clearing house for easements with other organizations as holders. One possible role for ODF includes identification of high value areas. Peter explained that the department is working on a spatial analysis project. This prioritizes landscapes for landowners' assistance. Another potential role might be serving as a funnel for conservation easement payments to small landowners. We are also redoing our analysis of need for the legacy program.

In general, easements are held in perpetuity. More recently, limited term easements have become more popular, but many of the larger holders, such as the BPA, expect perpetual easements for long-term mitigation purposes. Also, contracts for easements generally require annual monitoring and the acceptance of the responsibility to defend the easement. Therefore, easements need to be set up appropriately to include maintenance funds for these activities. ODF has been cautioned that if we do enter into easement holdings, we need to do some research first to be sure we get it right the first time. Gary commented that there are so many ways the agency could be involved in easements; he'd like to know what each one will add to staff workload. That could be a big issue with the department stretched rather thin at the moment. We also need to get some idea of landowner interest in the subject. We could try to do pilot projects in limited areas.

It's uncertain what landowner interest in easement programs might be since many landowners don't know much about them or even that they exist. We need to get the word out to them, if only in a one-page informational sheet. Peter attended the Green Belt Land Trust presentation at OSWA a few weeks ago and was pleasantly surprised at the turnout. The presentation was mainly a question/answer session and the audience showed a lot of interest in the topic and asked a lot of questions. Sarah suggested OFRI could design an informational publication on easements. The department could also hold seminars to spread the word.

Craig summarized the discussion. It looks like there is enough interest on the part of the CFF to recommend the department move ahead on this topic of easements. We're already involved with the legacy program and we have the opportunity to work with Bonneville on a project. One of the major incentives for a landowner to participate in an easement program is that it provides compensation for ecosystem services. Another big incentive is preserving a working landscape. It could also be of benefit to the department if we became an alternative funding source in some of these cases. It's important to the state's interest both economically and environmentally that these lands are preserved. Another incentive is the

opportunities they represent for landowners with smaller parcels. The program could also have a positive impact on succession planning and reducing development pressure.

### **Forward Agenda**

Peter updated the committee on the progress we've made on the forward agenda of the topics that came out of last year's symposium. He quickly went through the handout that listed the topics and importance/intensity level. The group reassessed the levels and changed some of them. The first topic, conservation easements, was covered pretty well this morning. Some of the topics may be important, but we are not necessarily the appropriate agency to take the lead on the subject. It was recommended that we reconnect with the Big Look committee.

### **Oregon Plan**

Jo Morgan joined the group to present the latest information on the Oregon Plan revisions for forestlands. She had given a presentation at the SW Regional Committee the previous day and was asked why Forests Practices is taking this task on, rather than OWEB. OWEB is essentially a banker for the plan and attracts a broad range of interest. The Oregon Plan was set up through statute and rules that all natural resource agencies must participate in the plan. OFIC came on board in the beginning, then OSWA joined. Having ODF involved in the plan allows forestland owners a voice with other participants in the plan. Jo presented a new document on Oregon Plan voluntary measures that was essentially written by landowners for landowners through their comments and suggestions over the years. It's an aid to give landowners ideas of what actions they can take on their lands to help conservation measures. She asked the committee to review the document to ensure its readability. She also wanted to know if implementation guidance would be helpful. She would like to provide training at some point, so any ideas the committee has in that regard would be appreciated. Comments are due by the end of July. Gary suggested the committee submit a letter of support to the Board regarding the Oregon Plan. A suggestion was made to include more examples in the document of landowners working on their projects, so anyone reading it could identify and understand better what the document addresses. The talk turned to training for stewardship foresters on riparian areas so they can assist landowners with their projects.

### **Private Forests/POPs**

Peter updated the committee on the latest on the budget situation and program option packages (POPs). He provided a handout to the group. The program budget is far enough along now to be provided to our stakeholders.

Component A focuses on urban forestry. An increasing amount of the Private Forests staff workload has been shifting to the urban/rural interface. We have legislative mandates for both urban forestry assistance and regulatory oversight that we need to address. We need the resources to be more proactive, and help cities develop forest practice ordinances that allow management. At current staffing levels, we are unable to meet these needs. We are asking for a land use policy analyst, five new community stewardship forester positions throughout the state, and restoration of full funding to two existing Natural Resources Specialist 3s that were reduced to half time work due to federal budget reductions in the last biennium.

Component B addresses supporting family forestlands. Family forestlands are often found in areas where there are economic pressures to convert to non-forest use. We need more staffing to effectively address family forestland issues and help landowners keep their land in working forests. We are asking for eight new stewardship foresters in the field, a new family forestland policy analyst, a federal grants coordinator, and an administrative support person.

Component C is Forest Practices Compliance Auditing Program. This component involves resources to improve and develop compliance and effectiveness monitoring/auditing program to oversee private forests management practices. We don't have the staff to perform the auditing of harvest operations to ensure compliance. We are asking for one compliance monitoring specialist, one training coordinator, three field monitoring coordinators, and restoration of 5.0 FTE of capacity in stewardship foresters, unit foresters, and support staff.

Bottom line is we are asking for \$5.2 million more in new funds, which includes 21 new positions, and 27 FTE. If we get this, we'll be back to 1999 level in staffing.

### **Board of Forestry Report**

Peter provided the committee with a brief list of what will be included in our report to the Board. The report will summarize what the committee has accomplished since last year's symposium. This includes our discussions of conservation easements and funds, a recommendation on a pilot project, and what roles should be explored by the Private Forests Program in developing this new incentive. There will be a summary of where we are regarding other issues coming out of the symposium. The report will also raise the Big Look issue, and it will offer comments and recommendations on the POPs package, and include the Oregon Plan statement. The report will also emphasize moving more toward incentives and away from regulations.

### **Next Meeting**

August 15, 2008. We will be presenting information to the BoF at their meeting in September. The committee needs to meet before then to discuss what should be included in the report. This will include a discussion of putting our annual report together between this meeting and the July 24 BOF meeting.

Meeting dates were scheduled through the end of the year: 8/15, 9/25, 10/30, 11/20, 12/18.