



Expectations

A Newsletter About Elliott State Forest Planning

September 2002

Input Invited on Planning Ideas

We've been busy for the past year or so pulling together wildlife and economic studies, and now we're at a point where we need to narrow the focus of the planning effort.

After considering a wide range of management scenarios, we have identified three key management concepts that we believe will produce a balanced approach to managing the Elliott State Forest.

We want to hear from you. Please take some time to review the information in this newsletter and tell us what you think.

See Questions on Page 11

We plan to hold public meetings later in the process to discuss draft management strategies. For now we are asking for your written comments on the three key management concepts to help us move forward in the planning process.

If you have questions about the information presented here, please contact Larry Sprouse at 541-267-1775, or by e-mail at lsprouse@odf.state.or.us.

Comments Due By Oct. 31

Revision Reaches Checkpoint

Comments on Elliott State Forest Plans Now Sought

The revision process for the Elliott State Forest's has reached a point where it's a good time for persons interested in the forest to check the progress so far.

The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) has identified three key concepts that will help focus the direction of the forest management plan and habitat conservation plan revision process.

Interested persons are invited to comment on these concepts and the planning effort. A written comment period runs until Oct. 31. A series of questions have been developed to help guide those commenting to



The 93,000-acre Elliott State Forest located in Coast Range between Coos Bay and Reedsport is the focus of planning efforts.

provide input most useful at this point in the planning process. Those questions appear on page 11.

Additional comment periods and public involvement opportunities will be provided as the revision process moves forward. Next in the development process will be planning a landscape strategy – how the concepts currently under

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Department of Forestry Seeks Multi-species HCP

Current Planning Focuses on Management Certainty, Habitat Protection

The Oregon Department of Forestry's current forest planning for the Elliott State Forest is driven by a constitutional mandate to produce revenue for Oregon schools in an environmentally sound manner.

The Elliott State Forest is a "working" forest that generates revenue through timber harvest for schools. It also is a place for wildlife.

Special protection measures for developing and maintaining habitat for threatened and endangered species are spelled out in the

Elliott's current habitat conservation plan (HCP). The HCP now in place originally covered both the threatened northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet.

Although the current HCP protected those two species, the strategies for the marbled murrelet were initially seen as short term. Not much was known about the seabird that nests in inland older forests when the federal government in 1995 approved the Elliott State Forest HCP.

Due to this general lack of

potential harm from harvest operations.

More was known about the northern spotted owl at the time of the HCP's approval, prompting a 60-year incidental take permit for that species.

For the past several years as part of the HCP agreement, ODF has participated in and funded research on the marbled murrelet and northern spotted-owl. ODF plans to use this and other information it has learned to revise the Elliott State Forest HCP. ODF also plans to change its forest management plan (FMP) for the Elliott State Forest to incorporate the most current forestry research.

As ODF began considering revising the HCP for marbled murrelets, it became clear that other species either now or in the near future also would need to be included in the HCP.

To provide management certainty for a longer period of time, the Elliott's planning team suggested a multi-species HCP that would include the northern spotted-owl, marbled murrelet, coho salmon and other species of concern. The State Land Board agreed with this approach.

The goal of these changes is to develop a management plan and HCP that will consistently produce dependable revenue over the long term for the Common School Fund, primarily through sustainable timber harvests, while providing for wildlife habitat and other forest values.



With little known about marbled murrelets in 1995, the HCP for the threatened seabird had a limited duration. Recent research is being used to draft new guidelines for developing and maintaining habitat to protect the bird.

(Drawing by Christine Holden)

knowledge, ODF and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) agreed to limit the incidental take permit for marbled murrelet on the Elliott State Forest to only six years. The marbled murrelet incidental take permit expired in October 2001. An incidental take permit often accompanies an HCP and recognizes a landowner's conservation efforts as an offset to

Common School Lands Mandate: Maximum Long-term Revenue

The Oregon Department of Forestry manages the Elliott State Forest with a goal to generate the greatest amount of revenue in the long run for the Common School Fund, consistent with sound techniques of land and timber management.

More than 90 percent of the Elliott State Forest is owned by the State Land Board and revenue generated from timber sales on those lands goes to the Common School Fund. The remainder of the forest is owned by the Board of Forestry (BOF), with about two thirds of those revenues going to the county in which BOF lands are located.

ODF has a contract with the State Land Board to manage Common School lands under the Common School Land management standards.

The Oregon Constitution (Article VIII, Section 5) authorizes the State Land Board to manage Common School Forest Lands “with the object of obtaining the greatest benefit for the people of this state, consistent with the conservation of this resource under sound techniques of land management.”

According to a 1992 opinion of former Oregon Attorney General Charles Crookham, the “greatest benefit for the people” standard requires the State Land Board to maximize long-term revenue to the Common School Fund, within the context of environmentally sound management.

The goals of the State Land Board’s asset management plan are linked to the constitutional mandate and the opinion of the attorney general.



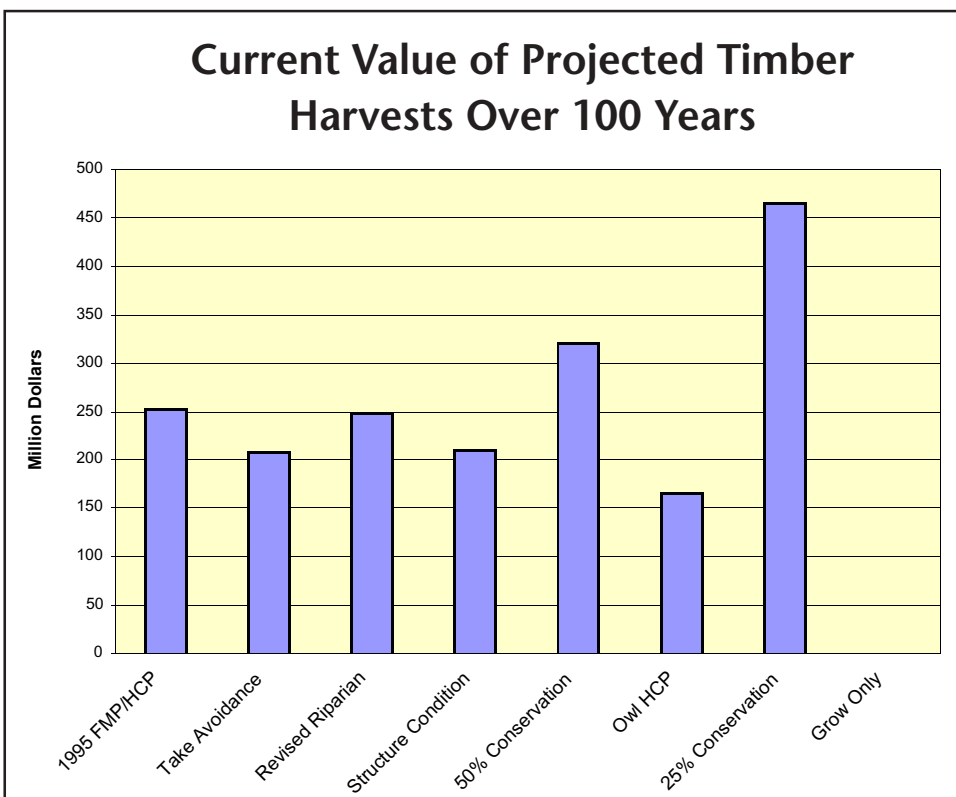
Most of the Elliott State Forest consists of Common School Land, with timber revenue – about \$16 million a year – going to support schools.

The State Land Board considered a range of management options when it adopted the current forest management plan and habitat conservation plan in the mid-1990s, including alternatives that emphasized conservation. The current plan was considered to be the best balance of resource values to meet their Constitutional duty to the State.

Both the forest management plan and the habitat conservation plan being developed by ODF will need to meet the same standards of the previous plans.

The State Land Board is made up of the Governor, Secretary of State, and State Treasurer. The Division of State Lands, the administrative agency of the State Land Board, assists in determining the long-term management of Common School Forest lands.

Figures represent the estimated value if, hypothetically, the next 100 years of projected timber harvests – under each management approach – were sold at today’s prices. Note, the Grow Only approach lists no value because no harvesting would occur. See page 5 for summary of management approach models. ODF produced graph from computer modeling by OSU Professor John Sessions.



Elliott State Forest Management Concepts Explored

ODF Looks to Focus on Reserves, Structure and Riparian Areas

After looking at a wide range of management approaches for the Elliott State Forest, the Oregon Department of Forestry has narrowed its focus to three key concepts that emerged from the process.

The three concepts are maintaining reserve areas, using forest structure to define habitat conditions, and applying the latest science in managing riparian areas and watershed functions.

Additional public comment will be sought when a landscape strategy using the three concepts has been drafted. The landscape strategy will

drive the development of the plans for forest management and habitat conservation.

In analyzing the broad array of management approaches, the planning team used three primary considerations as seen in the decision matrix on this page. For each of the approaches the team evaluated whether the approach would:

- 1) Maximize revenue to the Common School Fund over the long term,
- 2) Contribute to the survival and recovery of threatened and endangered species, and prevent

future listings, and

- 3) Be politically viable (likely to be approved by the State Land Board and accepted by the public).

The Planning Team is made up of representatives from the Division of State Lands, the Department of Forestry, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and State Attorney General's Office. It includes ODF Coos District staff who work on the Elliott State Forest, wildlife and fisheries biologists, planning and monitoring specialists, and a public information officer.

Representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service also have been involved in the process. These two federal services will eventually decide whether to approve the habitat conservation plan.

A summary of the array of management approaches appears on page 5. The range of approaches is intended to represent a wide cross-section of possible management scenarios for comparison purposes.

When developing the range of approaches, planners took into consideration public comments from earlier meetings. Those comments sought a balanced approach to managing the Elliott State Forest, with emphasis placed on economic, environmental and social benefits.

Economic and resource analyses were conducted on the management approaches. Graphs and charts of those studies can be found throughout this newsletter.

Decision Matrix								
Elliott State Forest Management Approaches								
Core Planning Team Analysis								
Rating: Scale 0 to 5 5 = highest score								
Goals and Objectives	Management Approach							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Maximize revenues to Common School Fund in the long run.	3	2	3	3	3	1	5	0
Important contributor to timber supply, present and future.	*	*	3	3	3	*	*	*
Sustained yield over long term	*	*	4	4	4	*	*	*
Contribute to survival and recovery of T&E species, and prevent future listings.	3	3	4	3	5	4	1	5
Meet federal and state ESAs.	*	5	5	5	5	5	1	5
Provide recreational opportunities.	*	*	3	3	2	*	*	*
Manage for biological diversity.	*	*	3	4	3	*	*	*
Achieve ecosystem restoration and watershed health.	*	*	3	3	4	*	*	*
Maintain/obtain HCP.	*	*	5	2	3	*	*	*
Political viability (likely approval by SLB and acceptance by public)	5	2	5	2	3	2	1	0
Shaded areas mark the high scores among the three fully rated management approaches. * Indicates no rating. Core Team determined 1) these management approaches fell outside constitutional mandates, or 2) the ratings would be insufficient to receive final consideration.								

Conceptual Management Approaches Summary

General Description	Timber Production	Conservation Areas	Riparian Strategy
Model #1 1995 FMP/HCP			
HCP for owls and murrelets Calibration of model	Non-declining flow 17 management basins Rotation ages vary: 80-240 years	Total reserves 24%**	Current riparian strategies exceed FPA (Forests Practices Act)
Model #2 Take Avoidance			
No HCP – manage under take avoidance for owls, murrelets, fish	Non-declining flow Minimum harvest age 45 years Timber production emphasis	Protect owl/murrelet sites through surveys Total reserves 30%-58%	Current riparian strategies (exceed FPA)
Model #3 Revised Riparian Strategies			
1995 FMP/HCP with NW FMP riparian strategies.	Non-declining flow 17 management basins Rotation ages vary: 80-240 years	Total reserves 25%**	NW FMP riparian management strategies
Model #4 Structure Condition			
Management used to create array of habitat characteristics across landscape*	Non-declining flow Rotation ages vary depending upon forest-wide structural mix	Maintain existing Habitat Conservation Areas /Marbled Murrelet Management Areas until new habitat develops Total reserves 57%-15%	NW FMP riparian management strategies
Model #5 50% Conservation Area			
50% of Elliott allocated to conservation areas	Non-declining flow Minimum final harvest age 45 years	Total reserves 50%**	NW FMP riparian management strategies
Model #6 Owl HCP			
HCP for owls only Take avoidance strategy for murrelets and coho	Non-declining flow 17 management basins Rotation ages vary: 80-240 years	Total reserves 24-49%**	Current riparian strategies (exceed FPA)
Model #7 25% Conservation Area			
25% of Elliott allocated to conservation areas	Non-declining flow Minimum final harvest age 45 years	Total reserves 25%**	NW FMP riparian management strategies
Model #8 Grow Only			
No management activities 100% of Elliott allocated as conservation area	No timber production	100% conservation area	100% conservation area

* 5-15% Regeneration
10-20% Closed Single Canopy
15-35% Understory
20-30% Layered
20-30% Older Forest Structure

Definitions:

Non-declining flow – an even rate of timber harvest over time.

NW FMP – Northwest Oregon State Forest Management Plan
HCP – Habitat Conservation Plan

** Reserves include Habitat Conservation Areas, Marbled Murrelet Management Areas, Riparian Management Areas and operationally limited areas.

Management Concept:

Reserve Areas Continue for Wildlife and Other Values

The management concept of having reserves – currently used on the Elliott State Forest – would continue as the draft landscape strategy is developed.

Two types of reserve areas are proposed as a management tool – one specifically for threatened wildlife and the other for more general purposes.

The first, would be reserves mainly for threatened and endangered species. These would be in areas with structural conditions considered to be habitat and in areas currently used by northern spotted owls and marbled murrelets.

The second type of reserve refers to other values, such as scenic areas, steep areas above houses and busy roads, riparian (streamside) management areas, and in areas not capable of growing trees for commercial timber production.

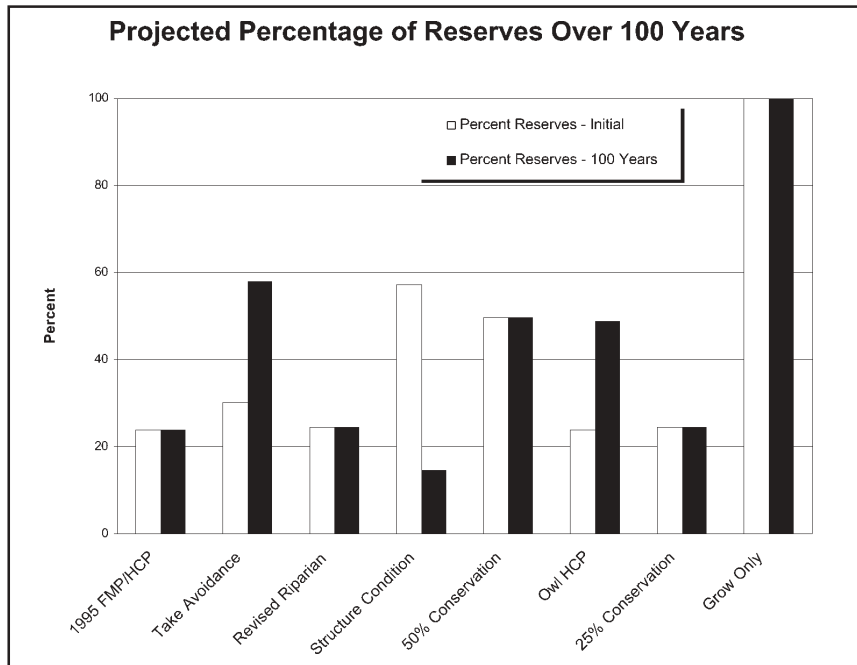
In some cases, the different types of reserve areas would overlap and in other cases would be

separate and located in different areas.

The reserve areas would be determined through a collaborative process with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Oregon

Department of Forestry biologists to determine where reserves would best serve the species at risk.

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Figures show the percentage of reserves initially and after 100 years under a wide array of management approaches. ODF produced graph from computer modeling by OSU Professor John Sessions.

Management Concept:

Revised Aquatic and Riparian Strategies

Though the current management strategies used on the Elliott State Forest provide a high level of stream protection, some changes would be proposed to the current strategies based on the latest science about how streams function.

Under a new management plan, the strategies would be designed to maintain or enhance the key ecological functions of aquatic, riparian, and upland areas that directly influence the freshwater

habitat of aquatic species.

Changes are proposed to ensure ecological processes of streamside areas are maintained and enhanced. The main change would be to recognize the importance of large wood delivery to stream systems from

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Many factors must be considered to restore and maintain properly functioning stream systems.

(Photo by Mike McMurray)

Management Concept:

Using Stand Structure Characteristics to Define Forest Habitat

The look and feel of a forest can be more important than age when it comes to defining habitat.

This “look and feel” approach is often referred to as structure – the components that make up a forest. These components would include trees (of various sizes and types), and also standing dead trees (snags), down wood (decaying logs) and other vegetation such as shrubs. All these components are important to wildlife.

The current plan uses stand age to define whether a stand is considered habitat for northern spotted-owls and marbled murrelets, but age alone is not necessarily a good surrogate for habitat quality. Some older stands on the Elliott State Forest lack the structural diversity needed for owl or murrelet habitat, while some younger stands do have the structural components needed and are being used by owls and murrelets.

In the revised management plan, the Oregon Department of Forestry

is proposing to use forest structure to define habitat on the Elliott State Forest.

Research has shown that structural characteristics of trees and other vegetation are important factors that influence whether or not a stand is used by a variety of wildlife species. Various stages of structural development are necessary to provide a wide range of wildlife habitats.

A key concept about structure as a defining characteristic of habitat is that it can be developed in a relatively short period of time by using an active management approach. A stand of trees can be periodically thinned to allow the remaining trees to grow and develop structure at a faster rate than would occur naturally.

Snags can be created, and down wood can be left behind after thinning operations. The more widely spaced larger trees allow light to reach the forest floor, encouraging a vigorous understory



Multiple canopies of smaller and bigger trees growing together represent components of complex structure, a stand development condition typically found in older forests. (Photo by Mike McMurray)

of trees and shrubs to grow.

This type of forest – with multiple canopies of large and smaller trees, along with snags and

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landslide processes occurring in upper stream reaches.

Science indicates that landslides and the large wood and gravel they deliver to streams are a key process for properly functioning stream systems.

Revised strategies would expand riparian management areas (RMAs) to the width of a site-potential tree (160 feet). On fish-bearing streams, the inner 100 feet would be managed to achieve a mature forest condition, while the outer 60 feet would require a specific number of

trees per acre be retained. The effects of these RMAs would be similar to current Elliott aquatic/riparian strategies, which require a 100-foot no-harvest RMA, on fish-bearing streams.

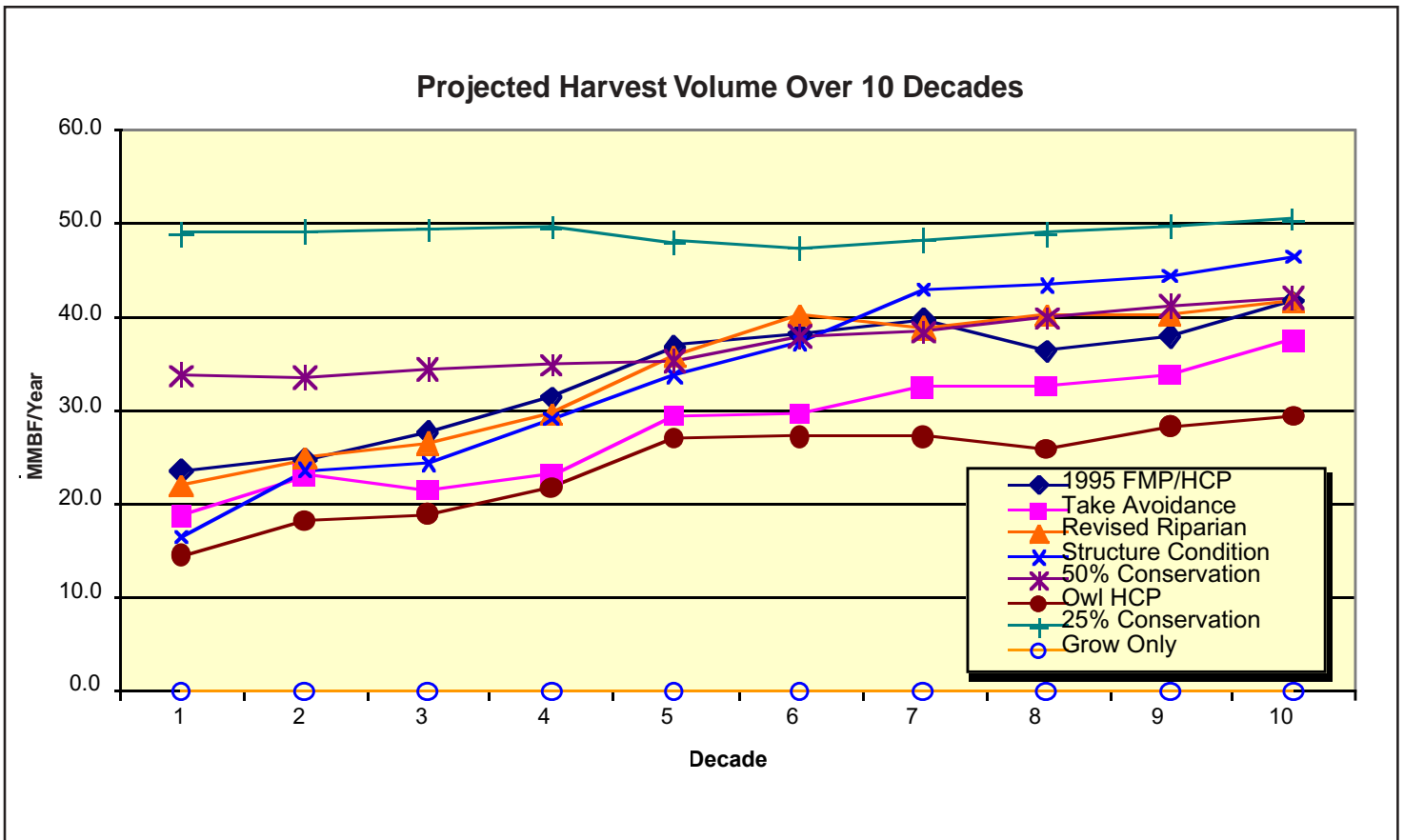
The revised strategies also would include RMAs on perennial and intermittent non-fish bearing streams in the upper reaches of Elliott stream systems.

The most significant difference between the current and revised strategies would be to require a specific number of trees to be

retained along intermittent, non-fish bearing streams in the upper stream reaches. These trees would provide a source of large wood that would be delivered over time to stream systems through landslide processes.

Roads would continue to be carefully managed to minimize resource impacts and also be evaluated for decommissioning where appropriate. Currently, roads are managed to prevent water quality problems and maintain

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Volume projections for each of the eight management approaches are listed in MMBF (million board feet) per year. Note, the Grow Only approach appears on the 0.0 line because no harvesting would occur. ODF produced graph from computer modeling by OSU Professor John Sessions.

Reserves

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The purpose of reserves would be to 1) maintain unique or special habitats; 2) maintain biodiversity; 3) encourage a full range of ecosystem functions; 4) act as a safety net; and, 5) be available as reference areas when testing overall landscape strategies.

The location of the reserve areas would remain fixed for the duration of the plan. Some timber harvests – in consultation with biologists – could occur in younger plantations to help develop complex habitat in areas designated as reserves.

Structure

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decaying down wood – is a stage of forest development called complex structure.

The use of structural stages to help define habitat emphasizes the composition and structural diversity of stands.

While some of the characteristics associated with older forests can only be developed over time, the development of many important structural characteristics are more a factor of how a stand develops than its age.

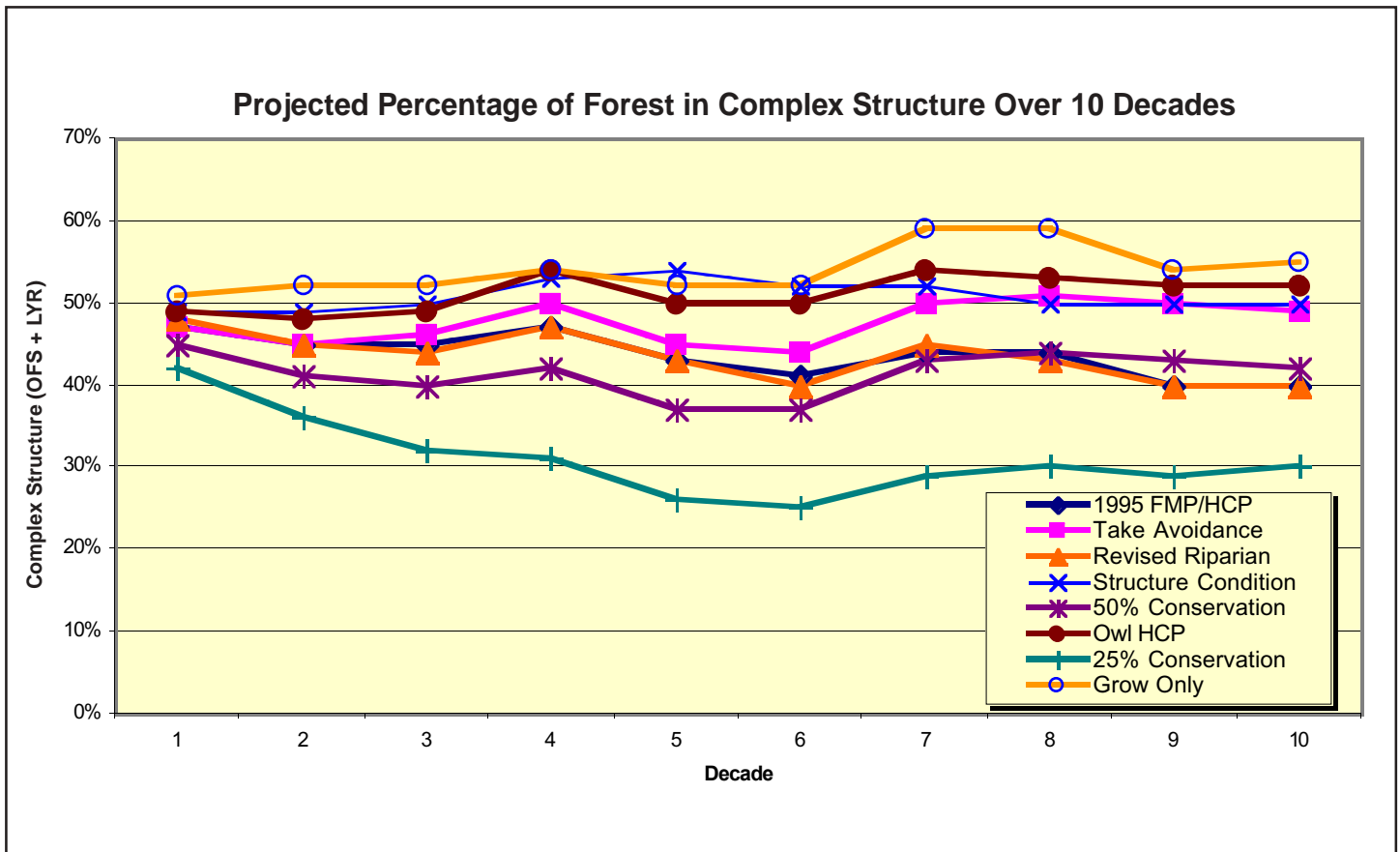
Aquatic, Riparian

continued from page 7

adequate fish passage where roads cross fish-bearing streams – while keeping as much forestland in a productive condition as possible.

Slope stability would continue to be addressed through landslide-hazard assessment using geotechnical expertise to identify alternatives to minimize, mitigate or avoid risks to high landslide hazard locations.

Under the current plan, slope stability is addressed through carefully planned and constructed roads using modern techniques and standards. During harvest planning, modifications are made to harvest plans as appropriate based site-specific evaluations of harvest areas by ODF geotechnical specialists.



Complex structure is a stand development condition that includes large and small trees, snags (standing dead trees) and down wood (decaying fallen trees). This condition is considered the type of habitat used by northern spotted owls and marbled murrelets. ODF produced graph from computer modeling by OSU Professor John Sessions.

Revision Process

continued from page 1

consideration will look when they are applied across the 93,000-acre state forest.

ODF has collected a significant amount of information over the past year on aquatic habitat and the presence of sensitive animal species. This information, along with figures from economic studies, input from previous public meetings and forest modeling conducted by Dr. John Sessions of Oregon State University was used to identify the following key concepts:

- Continue to maintain reserves for unique or special habitats important to wildlife, especially to northern spotted owls and marbled

murrelets – two threatened birds under the Endangered Species Act.

- Maintain and restore properly functioning stream systems by designating areas along waterways for special treatment.

- Use a forest's structural characteristics – large trees, snags, down wood, different kinds of trees and multiple canopy layers – instead of age to determine its value as wildlife habitat.

ODF manages the forest to produce dependable revenue for the Common School Fund, mainly through sustainable timber harvest using environmentally sound management techniques.

The planning process currently under way seeks a multi-species

habitat conservation plan with strategies to continue to protect the threatened northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet, and other species of concern such as the coastal coho salmon, amphibians, songbirds and bats.

Forest Fact

For every 1 million board feet of timber harvested in the Elliott State Forest, 11 to 13 jobs are generated in SW Oregon with an average annual wage of \$32,000.

(2001 Socio-Economic study by ODF)

Elliott Became First Oregon State Forest in 1930

Named for State Forester Who Orchestrated Federal Land Trades

The 93,000-acre Elliott State Forest, located in the Coast Range between Coos Bay and Reedsport, became a state forest in 1930. It was the first state forest.

It is named after Francis Elliott, Oregon's first State Forester, who worked many years to create the forest



Francis A. Elliott
State Forester 1911-1930

by trading scattered state lands around the state for one large block of land.

Francis Elliott died just weeks before the final deeds were acquired and the state Board of Forestry named the forest after Elliott as a final honor.

The state lands used to make the trade came from the lands the federal government gave to Oregon when the territory became a state in 1859. Oregon received two sections of every township as a school grant – totaling 3.5 million acres to finance its schools.

Most of the “school” land was sold between 1859 and 1912 to build schools and pay teachers. Only about 130,000 acres of Common School forest land were left by 1912 – with about 70,000 of those acres within National Forest boundaries.

These lands were scattered at high elevations in Western Oregon and at scattered, low-value sites in Eastern Oregon. These were remote areas for which the state couldn't find buyers.

State Forester Francis Elliott and Gov. Oswald West decided to trade these last remainders of Oregon's School Lands, located in various national forests, to the federal government for a block of federal land

to become the first state forest. Ultimately, the Millicoma tract in Coos and Douglas counties was picked as the block of land.

The forest was young, the result of the Coos Bay Fire of 1868.

Starting near Scottsburg northeast of the present-day Elliott State Forest, the fire burned about 300,000 acres as it swept southwesterly – stopping only after it reached the waters of Coos Bay. Some trees in the fire were estimated to be 300 years old.

After the fire, the forest regenerated naturally as a Douglas-fir dominated forest. The State began locating property boundaries and developing roads in the 1930s using the Civilian Conservation Corps (the CCCs) to build ridgetop roads until World War II interrupted their work.

In 1940, the forest grew in size

when Coos County deeded to the Board of Forestry about 6,000 acres of tax-delinquent lands that abutted the existing forest. This

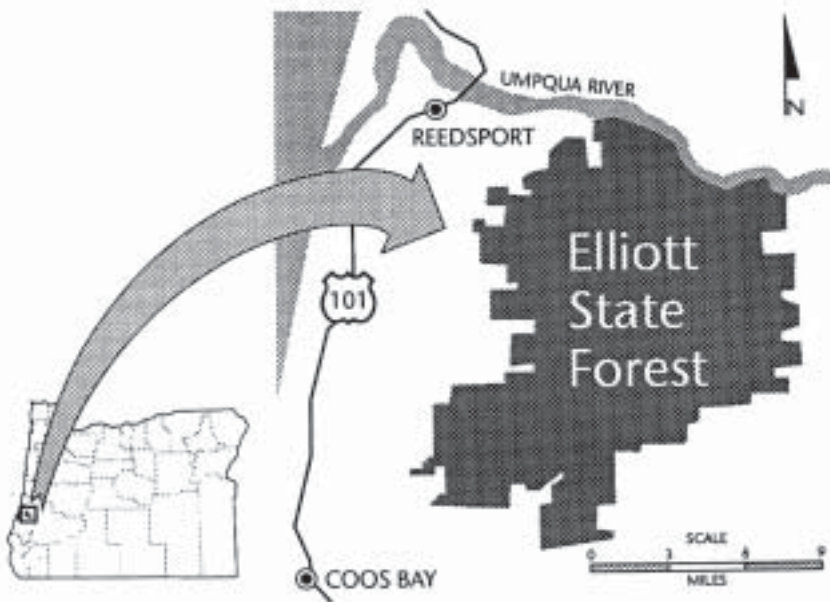
was done with the stipulation that the county would receive a portion of the future revenues from the lands.

Intensive forest management began in the 1950s. Another 14,000 acres were added in the 1960s.

In the mid-1990s, a forest management plan and habitat conservation plan (HCP) were approved. The HCP, approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, was the first of its kind for a state forest in Oregon.

Over the years, timber sales from the Elliott State Forest have contributed millions of dollars to the Common School Fund. Annual revenue under the current management plan is about \$16 million.

Federal approval of Elliott HCP in 1995 marked first-ever for Oregon state forests



The Elliott State Forest is located in Coos and Douglas counties. A September 2001 socio-economic study found timber-related industries generate about 10 percent of Coos County's personal income. Some 17 percent of Douglas County workers are employed in the lumber and wood products industry.

Questions

1. ODF identified a broad range of management approaches, based on previous public input. What are your thoughts about the approaches – do they represent a reasonable range?
2. ODF used criteria to identify the three key management concepts that fulfill the mandates for the land. Do the criteria represent a reasonable way of narrowing the range of approaches? Are there additional appropriate criteria?
3. ODF identified three concepts from the management approaches (See page 5) (Model 3 - revised aquatic strategies; Model 4 - use of forest structure to define habitat; and Model 5 - maintaining reserves for important habitat) to provide a reasonable balance of environmental, social and economic values – consistent with meeting the mandates for these lands. In terms of balance, what is your view about using these three concepts to build a set of landscape strategies?

Submit Your Comments By Oct. 31

Mail to:

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Forestry
63612 Fifth Road
Coos Bay, OR 97420

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Lsprouse@odf.state.or.us

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Larry Sprouse
541-269-2027

Why ODF is Asking These Questions

The purpose of these questions is to obtain input from the public on the direction of the Elliott State Forest's current forest planning effort. Both the Elliott's Forest Management Plan (FMP) and Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) are currently under revision.

The planning team obtained initial input in early 2001 through a series of public meetings to listen to what Oregon's citizens viewed as important considerations in managing the Elliott State Forest. The planning team heard a wide range of comments encompassing a range of economic, environmental and social values.

Since that time, the planning team has evaluated a broad array of management scenarios that include these values, and has identified three key concepts to narrow the focus of the planning effort.

The planning team is seeking input from the public on the evaluation process that the team used and the resulting three concepts to carry forward in the planning process.

In general, the planning team is ready to move forward with specific strategy development. Before doing that, we want to know if the public believes that using the three concepts identified by the planning team will produce a plan that will balance the economic, environmental and social values of the Elliott State Forest, and meet the mandates for managing these state forest lands.



OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY
 PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
 2600 STATE STREET
 SALEM, OR 97310

"STEWARDSHIP IN FORESTRY"

	2002	2003												2004						
Action	July	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	
Public meetings																				
Strategy development																				
Model outputs for new strategies																				
Scientific peer review of strategies																				
Scientific peer review of draft FMP																				
Write draft FMP																				
Write draft HCP																				
SLB and BOF approve FMP																				
SLB and BOF approve HCP submittal																				
Write draft EIS																				
Approval of HCP by USFWS/NMFS																				

Public involvement is planned at key points in the revision process of plans for forest management and habitat conservation.

Projected Timeline Expands to Allow for Development and Review

The timeline for the revision process for the Elliott Forest Management Plan (FMP) and Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) has been expanded to allow time for appropriate development and review.

The Oregon Department of

Forestry is committed to meaningful public involvement and peer review at key points in the revision process.

Both the Board of Forestry and the State Land Board must approve a new or revised FMP. A HCP for listed species must be approved through the NEPA (National

Environmental Policy Act) process by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service.

The timeline for the revision process appears on this page.