



Federal Forestlands Advisory Committee Ad Hoc Implementation Work Group (FFAC IWG)

Accomplishments & Highlights of Action Items from Inception Spring 2009 to November 2010

Introduction

The FFAC IWG has been meeting since Spring 2009. Included are leaders from state and federal agencies, county government, tribal government, interest groups and private forestland owners. In many respects, the FFAC IWG has become an elevated forum to discuss and coordinate policies that affect forest health issues, and to leverage resources through discussions that are leading toward a statewide network of government agencies and local forest health collaboratives. *Attachment A* lists the entities participating with the IWG.

Work to date has resulted in better understanding of the assistance and coordination necessary to deliver the administrative, financial, and technical resources that local collaborative partnerships need “to successfully build trust and help identify scientifically informed and socially acceptable forest management projects to improve forest health.” The FFAC IWG is championing assessments on Federal forestlands. These assessments involve proactive collaborative planning for landscape scale projects to address high priority needs. The collective efforts of the FFAC IWG are resulting in a stronger network of forest health collaboratives and better leveraging of resources across Federal forestlands in Oregon.

Background

Governor Kulongoski directed the state Board of Forestry to “create a unified vision of how federal lands should contribute” to sustainability, and to “make that vision actions-oriented and comprehensive – following through to the last step, including implementation”. The Board convened the Federal Forestland Advisory Committee (FFAC). In late 2008 the FFAC offered three broad recommendations: 1. Develop Federal legislation supporting a policy promoting local forest management collaboratives, 2. Seek State funding to enable Oregon Department of Forestry to assist federal managers, and 3. Provide active State support for local forest health collaboratives. *Attachment B* provides a summary of the FFAC recommendations.

In early 2009 the Governor’s Natural Resources Policy Director, Mike Carrier, convened interested parties with resources to invest in implementing the FFAC recommendations. The Federal Forestlands Declaration of Cooperation was completed in July 2009. The stakeholders

signing on to the Declaration agreed to participate on an FFAC Implementation Work Group and:

- Promote and encourage the formation of local collaborative partnerships.
- Provide a neutral forum to work directly with local partnerships in facilitating their formation and implementation.
- Seek to provide administrative, financial, and technical resources to local collaborative partnerships to build trust and help identify scientifically informed and socially acceptable forest management projects to improve forest health.
- Mutually support the leveraging of resources needed for implementation of the collaboratives and other recommendations of the FFAC, as appropriate given each stakeholder's resources, expertise and mission.
- Advocate for and identify specific opportunities for linking economic stimulus funding to implementation.
- Support the development of, and advocate for, projects that improve forest health and resiliency.
- Provide strategic technical assistance to the BLM and Forest Service in support of local collaborative processes.
- Link local collaborative partnerships to outside technical expertise as needed.
- Organize regularly scheduled meetings of the chief executives with forestland management responsibilities to discuss and coordinate policies that affect forest health issues and the recommendations of the FFAC report.
- Identify any other initial stakeholders that should be considered for participating as a member of this Work Group.

The Federal Forestlands Declaration of Cooperation is posted on-line at:
http://www.orsolutions.org/docs/DOC_FFAC_FINAL_4-09.pdf

Attachment A identifies the stakeholders that have signed the Declaration of Cooperation.

Accomplishments and Actions to Date

Accomplishments and actions to date include work to identify local forest health collaboratives, understand their status and resource needs and better deliver “administrative, financial, and technical resources to local collaborative partnerships to build trust and help identify scientifically informed and socially acceptable forest management projects to improve forest health” (*State/Local Recommendation #2*).

Fourteen (14) local forest health collaboratives have been identified across the state. These local collaboratives are in various stages of engagement and coordination with state and federal agencies to assess forest health conditions and then plan projects at the landscape scale. Successfully developing monitoring plans for specific landscape-scale projects, and funding these monitoring plans, will be a key to the pace and scope of implementing treatments and related projects. (*State and Local Recommendation #3* “By planning at the landscape scale, treatments can be designed to improve the ecological effectiveness and efficiency of actions taken.”)

The FFAC IWG has been successful in providing a neutral forum to share information, to consider how best to leverage resources, and to offer support and strengthen local collaboratives. The IWG has expanded to include more representation from industry and interest groups. A Statewide Collaboratives Subcommittee was formed in Fall 2009 to assist with implementing FFAC recommendations. The Subcommittee is providing better coordination and assistance to existing collaboratives and encouraging the formation of new local collaboratives. The expectation is these collective efforts will contribute to timelier and more effective implementation of landscape-scale forest health projects.

- Statewide Collaboratives Subcommittee
 - Formed Fall 2009. Includes USFS, BLM, Oregon Department of Forestry, Association of Oregon Counties, Sustainable NW, The Nature Conservancy, National Forest Foundation and Oregon Solutions. Work has included:
 - Identification of priority dry-side geographies for landscape scale forest restoration.
 - Development of a GIS map of Oregon forest collaboratives that is a model for USFS use in Washington State and elsewhere. (*Attachment C. Collaborative Boundary Map*, Oregon Department of Forestry GIS.)
 - Early work on identifying recurring needs of local collaboratives (*Attachment D*).
 - Review of requests for assistance from local communities:
 - Four (4) specific requests for assistance have been received to date –
 - Umpqua NF – Tiller Ranger District
 - FFAC IWG response - Tiller District “Road Map” to collaboration
 - Illinois Valley – Rogue-Siskiyou NF, Josephine County, Siskiyou Project
 - FFAC IWG response positive to leverage resources in support of landscape scale restoration. Project development is underway.
 - Blue Mountains Forest Partners – assistance with an economic forum.
 - Deschutes NF “Skyline Project” – assistance for developing socioeconomic modeling, collaborative assistance with design of treatment prescriptions in conjunction with the USFS CFLRP grant.
 - A 5th request is in development -
 - Umatilla National Forest desires landscape analysis/values mapping for two southern Districts
 - Working with TNC to develop resource needs & cost estimate.
 - More local support and a “home” for a forest health collaborative need to be identified.

Specific contributions, accomplishments and actions of stakeholders signing the Federal Forestlands Declaration of Cooperation and others participating with the IWG include:

- Oregon Solutions
 - Staff to the FFAC IWG.
 - Staff to the Statewide Collaborative Subcommittee.
 - Inventoried local forest health collaboratives’ status and needs (see *Attachment D*).
 - Traveled locally to discuss and capture the status, needs, resources and the potential to leverage work through the FFAC work group

- Developed first statewide inventory of fourteen (14) local collaboratives working toward landscape-scale assessments and related project implementation, including organizational structure, participating organizations, actions to date, strategic objectives, landscape-scale activities completed or proposed, and needs.
- Arranged key local collaborators dialogue with the IWG to review needs in conjunction with CFLRP applications (Deschutes, Fremont-Winema and Malheur NF).
- USFS Region 6
 - USFS Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration program (CFLRP)
 - Reviewed Program design with the IWG and the Subcommittee.
 - IWG members assisted with support for Congressional appropriation. \$10M is in the FFY 2010-11 budget to initially implement the CFLRP nationally.
 - Forwarded 5 applications from Region to DC for funding consideration, including 3 from Oregon USFS supervisors– (Winema-Fremont, Deschutes, Malheur)
 - Completed a coordinated review w/ USFS staff and Statewide Collaborative Sub-committee.
 - Deschutes NF Skyline Project proposal selected for funding. \$500,000 in Year 1 of an anticipated 10-year project. 8/26/10 follow-up discussion w/ the FFAC IWG and local partners in Bend. Project proposal: http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/CFLR/documents/RegionalProposals/Region6/Deschutes/DeschutesSkyline_CFLRP_Proposal.pdf
 - Mobilizing to provide support to ensure the success of the Deschutes Forest Skyline project as well as to Forests that will submit new or revised CFLRP applications next year and beyond.
 - Regional Forester approved funding to support collaboratives (\$175K in the Federal Fiscal Year started 10/1/10). “First in nation” funding in a Forest budget specifically for this purpose.
 - Staffing a sub-group including the National Forest Foundation, SNW, USDA Rural Development and Oregon Solutions to develop criteria for the funding and the basis for a “Community Collaborative Grant Program” strategy.
 - Leveraged additional \$71K with NRCS in 9/2010.
 - USFS Partnership and Collaborators meeting 11/18/09 in Bend with local collaborative leaders and USFS staff produced early list of collaborative groups’ “recurring needs”.
 - Multi-party monitoring guidebook – Outcome of 11/18 meeting and prior discussions; USFS lead, USFS contract awarded 6/2010 to Sustainable NW. Guidebook to be completed by February 2011.
- Sustainable Northwest
 - Communication and sharing of information and partnering opportunities in relation to their emerging Dry Forest Investment Zone (DFIZ) project w/ the US Endowment for Forests and Communities.
 - Key approach is to build and strengthen regional networks among “community-based organizations” (CBOs) as a method of leveraging resources and sharing common goals.

- SNW is exploring opportunities to coordinate with other FFAC partners in support of new landscape scale collaborative efforts, including the USFS Wild Rivers District in the Illinois Valley.
- Linked the FFAC IWG to the Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition (RVCC) policy discussions in relation to the FFAC National Solutions recommendations.
- Lead for developing the USFS-funded stewardship contracting multi-party monitoring guidebook to be completed 2/2011.
- Oregon Department of Forestry
 - Support to the Oregon Renewable Energy Action Plan - Biomass Working Group, coordination and process support through SNW, Oregon Consensus, Oregon Solutions.
 - Provided forum to coordinate and seek input on forest health work with the Western Governors Association.
 - Developed GIS products including a map of forest health collaboratives in Oregon (*Attachment C*).
 - Exploring opportunities to partner to deliver GIS services in support of landscape assessments in the Illinois Valley and Umatilla National Forest.
- The Nature Conservancy
 - Worked to assure a common understanding of “landscape scale assessments” among stakeholders.
 - Shared “values mapping” process for landscape-scale planning and forest health project development.
 - Recruitment for “Forest Director” position underway. Expect to fill 10/2010 time frame.
 - Exploring opportunities to partner to deliver GIS services in support of landscape assessments in the Illinois Valley and Umatilla National Forest.
- Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI)
 - Completed a special report “Federal Forestland in Oregon: Coming to Terms with Active Forest Management of Federal Forestland”. Included review and input from the IWG.
Web access: http://oregonforests.org/assets/uploads/Federal_Forestlands.pdf
 - Sponsored FFAC IWG participation with OFRI Board reception and field tour – 8/26-27/2010 in Bend.
- Crag Environmental Law Center
 - Liaison and outreach with environmental groups participating in local collaboratives.
- US Senator Wyden’s Eastside forests bill – provided forum for expanding the dialogue in bill re-draft and subsequent discussions.
- US Representative Schrader bills – provided forum for discussion of biomass bills, EPA air quality rule review.
- Western Governor’s Association – provided forum for consideration of WGA forest health/landscape scale conservation efforts.

- Participated in the large landscape scale survey, provided information on Oregon forest collaborative and local collaborative needs.

DRAFT

Attachment A.

FFAC IWG Participating Stakeholders include:

Signing on to the Declaration of Cooperation:

- Governor's Office
- Economic Revitalization Team
- Oregon Department of Forestry
- US Forest Service
- BLM
- Crag Environmental Law Center *
- Oregon Forest Resources Institute
- Sustainable NW
- The Nature Conservancy *
- Oregon Business Council
- Association of Oregon Counties *
- Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
- PSU, Policy Consensus Center & Oregon Solutions

Others Participating include:

- Coquille Indian Tribe *
- Local forest health collaborative representatives
- Defenders of Wildlife
- Office of US Senator Wyden
- Office of US Senator Merkley
- Office of US Rep Schrader
- USDA Rural Development
- Pacific Rivers Council
- Ochoco Lumber
- American Forest Resources Council
- Oregon Business Alliance
- US EPA
- University of Oregon Ecosystem Workforce Program
- US Fish and Wildlife
- American Forest Resources Council
- Pacific Environmental Advisory Center
- National Forest Foundation

* Federal Forestlands Advisory Committee Members

Attachment B.

**Summary of Recommended Solutions from:
*Oregon's Vision for Federal Forestlands.***

Oregon Board of Forestry, January 2009.

[http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/BOARD/docs/FFAC Color Report and Cover for Web.pdf?ga=t](http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/BOARD/docs/FFAC_Color_Report_and_Cover_for_Web.pdf?ga=t)

State and Local Solutions

The overall *strategy* for state and local solutions is to ***take action to improve forest health.*** Symptoms of forest health (e.g., uncharacteristic wildfire, altered water quality and quantity, degraded fish and wildlife habitat, and reduced biodiversity and ecosystem resiliency) are of immediate importance. However, long-term success will require solving related problems (i.e., reduced timber harvest below sustainable levels and decreased infrastructure, reducing conflict over the desired amount of older forests, lack of trust, and policy coordination).

STATE AND LOCAL RECOMMENDATION #1

The Governor and the State Legislature should create a Federal Forestland Liaison Program to facilitate and support federal agency and local community efforts to improve forest health on federal forestlands.

STATE AND LOCAL RECOMMENDATION #2

The Governor and the State Legislature should assist federal agencies in providing administrative, financial, and technical resources to local collaborative partnerships to build trust and help identify scientifically informed and socially acceptable forest management projects to improve forest health. State funds should be managed by the Oregon Department of Forestry as one element of the Federal Forestland Liaison Program. We recommend that state and federal funding be sufficient to create three new collaborative processes annually and provide ongoing support for existing collaborations.

STATE AND LOCAL RECOMMENDATION #3

Local collaborative groups in cooperation with state and federal agencies should first assess forest health conditions and then plan projects at the landscape scale to address high priority needs. By planning at the landscape scale, treatments can be designed to improve the ecological effectiveness and efficiency of actions taken. To address the scale of the problem, it is our recommendation that these collaboratives convene around a geographic area of at least 100,000 acres.

STATE AND LOCAL RECOMMENDATION #4

Collaborative groups should define and delineate the amount and characteristics of older forests that should be conserved and re-established to maintain ecological sustainability and resiliency as part of their landscape assessment.

STATE AND LOCAL RECOMMENDATION #5

Leaders from state and federal agencies, county and tribal governments, and private forestland owners should meet on a regular basis to discuss and coordinate policies that affect forest health issues and the recommendations in this report.

National Solutions

Congressional action is needed to help address many of the problems that are identified in this report. Local groups and the State of Oregon working alone cannot solve the fundamental issues that are caused by uncoordinated forest policies, a lack of clear goals for sustaining all forest values, the potpourri of goals and mandates, or a lack of funding for federal agencies to carry out their management responsibilities.

NATIONAL RECOMMENDATION #1

Congress should develop legislation that creates an overarching federal forest policy for sustainable forests. This legislation should be on a par with the federal Farm Bill or Energy Bill, and establish a comprehensive framework for reviewing forest conditions and making decisions. Legislation could create a renewed national commitment and social contract to understand, enhance, and protect the health, productivity, and sustainability of America's forests.

NATIONAL RECOMMENDATION #2

Congress should develop comprehensive Forest Restoration Legislation that makes restoring healthy forest conditions a top priority, removes barriers to implementing restoration treatments, appropriates funding to support local communities engaged in forest restoration, and recognizes new scientific knowledge and contemporary stewardship goals that promote all environmental services provided by forests.

NATIONAL RECOMMENDATION #3

Congress should increase funding for forest management activities. This should be accomplished through a combination of increased appropriations, efficiencies, revenue generation, decoupling fire-fighting costs from agency budgets, and leveraging of federal dollars through partnerships at the state and local level.

Attachment C.

Oregon Forest Restoration Collaboratives Map:

http://www.orsolutions.org/docs/collaborative_boundary_map.pdf

DRAFT

Attachment D.

Recurring Needs of Local Forest Health Collaboratives

***From an Oregon Solutions staff report to the FFAC IWG
May 2010 (Rev. 11/10)***

In the course of investigating landscape-scale projects for FFAC IWG assistance across the state, staff identified the following common needs that have been expressed repeatedly among local collaboratives. These needs may be the basis for productive dialogue among the FFAC IWG on how to strategically share successes and coordinate assistance among all of the partners around that table and local collaboratives.

The identified recurring needs are, in no particular order:

- **Planning:** Strategic planning and development of a common vision(s) for desired future forest conditions is typically a self-defining process with each collaborative group.
- **Technical assistance:** The identification and availability of locally desired data, the need for gathering additional good data, and managing data varies across collaborative groups and Forests.
- **Science:** Development of “shared science”, determining scientific validity of locally held perceptions, is often needed. By what criteria is this done?
- **Prescription Design:** After a local collaborative group conducts the “TNC-style” landscape assessment/values mapping exercise, they still need to develop “common ground” active management prescriptions.
- **Adaptive Management:** Developing and funding monitoring programs is a shared need for local collaboratives. Developing commitment from federal agency partners that they will incorporate monitoring findings into future action is key.

And specifically, with regard to the collaboration process:

- **Collaborative Standing:** The approach to developing “standing” for collaborative groups is not well defined in rule or through Court decisions. What does this mean for existing and new collaborations? How will their record of collaboration determine “standing” in appeals or lawsuits against active management that has collaborative agreement and support? A related concern is the degree of ongoing commitment to collaboration when local federal land leadership is turned over.
- **Collaborative Decision-Making:** How, when, and why to use full consensus versus “critical mass of agreement ” (e.g. voting) among diverse stakeholders varies among collaborative groups, landscapes and specific active management issues.
- **Collaborative Capacity:** Requests for assistance and collaboration trainings for all parties are common. Neutral facilitation, conflict resolution, mediation, etc. skills – and resources to support such - are often in short supply. Funding local collaborative groups over the long haul for developing and maintaining this capacity is an issue.