

Agenda Item No:	3
Work Plan Title & #:	Forest Vitality Work Plan 3
IBI # & Title:	IBI 2 – Federal Forestlands
Presentation Title:	Federal Forestland Advisory Committee Implementation Work Group (FFAC IWG)
Date of Presentation:	September 7, 2011
Contact Information:	Kevin Birch, Interim Director Forest Resources Planning Program 503-945-7405 <a href="mailto:kevin.r.birch@state.or.us">kevin.r.birch@state.or.us</a>

**SUMMARY**

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an update on the work of the public/private partnership being used to implement recommendations the Board of Forestry adopted in a report, *Achieving Oregon’s Vision for Federal Forestlands*, in January 2009.

**CONTEXT**

The Federal Forestlands Advisory Committee (FFAC) was created in 2006 to assist the Board of Forestry in completing the Governor’s charge to “create a unified vision of how federal lands should contribute” to sustainability, and to “make that vision action-oriented and comprehensive – following through to the last step, including implementation.” In January 2009, the Board adopted a document, *Achieving Oregon’s Vision for Federal Forestlands*, that articulates the state’s vision for how federal forestlands should be managed.

The FFAC held numerous meetings to engage the public, government officials, and the scientific community; collect information; review pertinent documents; discuss concerns and ideas; and formulate solutions. The content of the report represents careful analysis and thoughtful discussion of the information made available to the FFAC, and the recommendations were adopted through a consensus based process.

The FFAC identified several many problems that are reducing the ability of federal forestlands in Oregon to contribute a full range of sustainable forest values to Oregonians and the Nation. These problems are interrelated and difficult to solve in isolation. The report identifies the most pressing “problems of place” and those overarching problems that if solved, would help to address “problems of place” and other concerns.

Addressing the complex and interrelated problems identified in the report requires a strategy at different scales that includes solutions at the state and local level, and solutions at the national level. The FFAC’s recommendations (Attachment 1) at the local level concentrate on supporting local collaborative groups to first assess forest health conditions and then plan projects at the landscape scale to address high priority needs.

## BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

In 2009 the Governor's Office created the FFAC Implementation Working Group (IWG) as an alternative to advance the recommendations of the FFAC report without creating a new state program. The group's primary purpose is to leverage public, private and non-profit resources in the absence of state funding for implementation. The IWG is made up of leaders from state and federal agencies, NGOs (e.g., Sustainable Northwest, Oregon Business Council, The Nature Conservancy, Crag Law Center) the Association of Oregon Counties, the Policy Consensus Center, and it is staffed by the Oregon Solutions program.

The goals of the IWG include:

- 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.
- Mutually support the leveraging of resources needed for implementation of the collaborative groups
- 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.

The IWG has been successful in providing a neutral forum to share information, to consider how best to leverage resources, and to work to support and strengthen local collaborative processes. Specific accomplishments and actions of the IWG include:

- Conducting an assessment to identify priority forest health and economic geographies for landscape scale forest restoration treatments.
- Development of a GIS map of collaborative processes in Oregon.
- Inventory of local forest health collaboratives' status and needs.
  - Currently in discussion with four collaborative groups to provide services including: assistance in conducting a landscape scale assessment, assistance in starting a new collaborative process, assistance in helping to implement a landscape forest health project, and assistance in developing an economic forum.
  - Currently in discussion with USFS and community leaders in one geography to develop/deliver collaboration training with the goal of establishing a new collaborative framework.
- Reviewed and commented to USFS R-6 on CFLRP applications. Arranged key local collaborators dialogue with the IWG to review needs in conjunction with CFLRP applications (Deschutes, Fremont-Winema, and Malheur NF).
- Working on "meta-level" needs of all forest collaboratives in Oregon:
  - Partnership to design and deliver a multiparty monitoring guidebook.
  - Development of a "collaborative capacity" grant fund led by USFS Region 6.
  - Early work to develop an Oregon Network of forest health collaborative groups.

- Leveraging funds to help the Malheur National Forest implement forest health projects in Grant and Harney counties where timber supply is badly needed to support the retention of critical infrastructure (Attachment 2).

Based on the inventory of local collaboratives needs, and information from the federal agencies, the IWG has developed a list of tasks it would like to accomplish in the next two years. Those tasks include:

- Developing a “Landscape Assessment Tool Kit” that includes data and models local collaborative groups can use to characterize the health of the forest and establish priorities.
- Support pilot projects to facilitate and reduce the cost and time for NEPA analysis and ESA consultation.
- Identify opportunities to increase treatment acres by providing project staffing support to federal agencies when they lack sufficient personnel with specific skills.
- Provide Support for Collaboration – training, facilitation, meeting scheduling, and other support activities as needed.
- Identify Funding Sources – Obtaining additional funding is the greatest need identified by local collaboratives.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

This item is information only, no action is required.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Staff will continue to work on federal forest issues with the Federal Forest Advisory Committee Implementation Work Group.

Staff will bring any issues regarding changes to the recommendations in *Achieving Oregon’s Vision for Federal Forestlands* to the Board for its consideration and approval.

Staff will bring any future Policy Option Packages that are developed to support the state working with local collaborative partnerships to the Board for its consideration and approval.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- (1) Executive Summary, *Achieving Oregon’s Vision for Federal Forestlands*
- (2) Governor’s Press Release