

Agenda Item No.:	F
Work Plan:	Overarching Issues Work Plan
Topic:	Board of Forestry Administration
Presentation Title:	Outcomes from Board of Forestry October Retreat
Date of Presentation:	November 16, 2022
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SUMMARY

The Board of Forestry (Board) and the Oregon Department of Forestry Executive Team (ET) discussed the following topics at the annual Board retreat in October: Board self-evaluation, agenda development, meeting cadence, work plan modifications, Board advisory committees, and Board governance. Additionally, a full day was devoted to beginning the development of a new strategic plan for the agency, which will replace the current *Forestry Program for Oregon* (2011). Discussion was facilitated by Robin Harkless from the National Policy Consensus Center at Portland State University. This staff report is primarily informational, providing a summary of key takeaways from the conversation and next steps; however, staff does seek a decision on the following items:

- Intervals for Board meetings in the 2023 and 2024 calendar years; and
- Moving forward with the development of board governance and a board policy manual.

CONTEXT

The annual fall retreat is typically a time when the Board and department staff discuss and begin to plan the next year’s Board meetings and topics. The Board has expressed interest in re-evaluating how they collaborate with staff to plan and execute board meetings. Some of these changes relate to process, others to board governance. The totality of this discussion lies within the context of a full revision of the *Forestry Program for Oregon*, which has been the Board’s strategic plan and was last updated in 2011. Based on the dialog between the Board and ET, there is support for managing meetings and agendas to be more adaptive and responsive to emerging policy issues, while allowing space for more interaction with the public and staff, particularly around the development of the new strategic plan.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The Board retreat and community spotlight events were well-received, offering an opportunity for the Board to interface formally and informally with department staff, community leaders, and policymakers. The following is a summary of key takeaways, next steps, and decision items:

Areas of consensus with proposed Board and department actions

- **New meeting cadence:** Discussion focused on fewer, longer duration meetings, creating space for more dialog around key decision points, enabling the inclusion of information items relevant to decisions before the board, and allowing dialog with staff for the strategic plan revision. The proposed format is also intended to decrease the overhead associated with planning and executing Board meetings, making more efficient use of Board and staff time. Intent is to test this format in 2023 and purposely plan three out of the four meetings to be held outside of Salem.
 - **Decision:** Board to approve the 2023 and 2024 calendars as presented (see attachments 1 and 2).

- **Iterative agenda-setting process:** Discussion focused on the importance of a mechanism for board members and staff to provide regular suggestions and feedback for agenda development. The process is to be developed and formalized.
 - **Action:** Department staff to work with Board to develop an updated agenda-setting workflow to be presented at January 2023 Board meeting.

- **Work plan lite:** Board work plans have traditionally been completed each biennium, with one plan per operating program, but within the past two years, issue-specific work plans were developed as they spanned across multiple programs and policy areas. Historically these work plans drive agenda development, as well as provide a nexus to internal planning and external accountability. The value, process, and cycle of the work plans were discussed, resulting in the following observations: Modifying the work plan tool to include standing items, long-term projects, policy/rulemaking needs, and emerging interests; Maintaining work plan matrices to display the iterative tracking, progress, and achievements of the agency during a calendar year; and Recognizing the work plan tool acts as a nexus of accountability for the agency’s internal and external communications, as well as feeds into the strategic direction of the Board.
 - **Action:** Department staff will work to simplify the work planning process by developing a single matrix to track planned board meeting items, which includes a mechanism for tracking progress on key initiatives. Draft matrix to be presented for discussion at the January 2023 Board meeting. Matrix to be refined the fully implemented by June 2023.

- **Board governance:** Discussion focused on the tenets and value of formalizing Board governance, intended to clearly identify roles, responsibilities, and communication pathways for the board-staff relationship. This effort would be memorialized in a board policy manual.
 - **Decision:** Board to support the State Forester in securing a contractor to coordinate, draft, and complete the proposed governance tool over the next 12-18 months.

Areas of interest that require more development

- **Board Advisory Committees:** There are several standing committees that are advisory to the Board of Forestry, with some under the Board’s authority to create and disband as business needs dictate. The structure, scope, policy relevance, and contribution to the Board and agency work by committees were explored at the retreat, resulting in the following observations:
 - Recognition that committees are either statutorily established or established by need; consider developing a process to formally stand up, modify, and sunset an advisory committee.
 - Diversifying the composition of advisory committees with appointments and reappointments affirmed by the Board.
 - A need to provide more guidance to the committees, enabling them to provide more meaningful input to the Board.
 - There is need to engage with this body of work, but capacity is limited – suggest incorporating into the board governance and board policy manual discussion.

➤ **Forestry Program for Oregon Revision:** The Board, in collaboration with staff, has initiated the process of revising the FPFO, which has traditionally served as the Board’s strategic plan. A three-member subcommittee has been formed to assist with this process. Planned discussions explored the vision and values, including the plan’s relevance and connection to the department’s operations.

- **Vision Statement:** The vision statement was conceptualized through the lens of articulating a future state for Oregon’s forests. The Board and ET worked in small groups to develop draft vision statements, which were presented for discussion by the full group. Key tenets offered by each group included the following:
 - 1) Healthier and more resilient forests.
 - 2) Diverse functional ecosystems that are able to persist and adapt.
 - 3) Strive for resilient forests that persist over time.
 - 4) Healthy and resilient forests benefiting all Oregonians current and into the future.

The full group discussed these alternatives and developed the following draft: “Complex and resilient forest ecosystems that endure and adapt.”

- **Values Brainstorming.** The values discussion between Board and executive team members was generative regarding different and perceived values that surround and are attached to forests. During the retreat, 118 individual values were offered by Board Members and staff. Organizing these in the context of a Climate Smart lens, responses fell into the following thematic areas:

Adaptation	40
Communities	33
Economy	23
Mitigation	21

- **Proposed Next Steps – FPFO revision:**
 - **Vision:** The Executive Team will review and offer further refinements to the proposed vision, and also consider the development of draft mission and purpose statements. These refinements will be discussed with the subcommittee and presented for discussion with the full board at their January 2023 meeting.
 - **Values:** Projecting forward, revisiting values with Board and agency staff in the lens of Climate Smart Forestry, as well as the incorporation of broader public perspectives. Staff will design a process for iterative review and incorporation of new thematic elements as values are discussed at subsequent meetings.
 - **Internal & External Engagement:** Staff will work with the National Policy Consensus Center to design processes for the engagement of internal staff and external communities around the development of the new strategic plan over the next year. The intent is to use the proposed Board meeting schedule to garner community input over the next calendar year and look for opportunities to engage staff through leadership meetings and other available forums on that timeline.

NEXT STEPS

As outlined in this staff report, next steps include the following:

- Implementation of a new meeting cadence in 2023 and 2024 (decision item).
- Development of formalized board governance and a board policy manual, with completion anticipated near the end of 2023 (decision item).
- Collaborative work with the Board to develop new mechanisms for planning and implementing meetings, including a new agenda development workflow and planning matrix for consideration at the January 2023 meeting.
- Continued discussion of Board advisory committees, potentially incorporated into the board governance effort.
- Further development of the new strategic plan, with the anticipated discussion at the January 2023 Board meeting to focus on the following:
 - Confirmation of the subcommittee's continued role;
 - Additional discussion of Mission, Vision, Values, and Purpose; and
 - Review of internal and external community engagement options

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the 2023 and 2024 Board meeting calendars, as well as the plan to engage a consultant for the development of a board policy manual.

ATTACHMENTS

- (1) 2023 Board of Forestry Calendar
- (2) 2024 Board of Forestry Calendar



Oregon

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2023 BOARD OF FORESTRY EVENTS

Field tours, work sessions, and special meetings may be organized throughout the calendar year

January 4* and 5	Meeting	Department Headquarters, Salem
March 8* and 9	Meeting	Location to be determined
April 26 and 27	Retreat	Location to be determined
June 7* and 8	Meeting	Location to be determined
September 6* and 7	Meeting	Department Headquarters, Salem
October 18 and 19	Retreat	Location to be determined

***Statutorily required by ORS 526.016.** The Board is mandated to hold public meetings on the first Wednesday after the first Monday in January, March, June, and September, at places designated by the chairperson of the board or the State Forester. The board may meet at other times and places in this state on the call of the chairperson or the State Forester. To conduct business, a majority of the voting members of the board must be electronically or physically present to vote on an item.

Effective Jan. 1, 2022 - ORS 192.670 amended to allow access and attendance to public meetings by telephone, video, or other electronic or virtual means. Included with the enrollment of HB 2560 provisions to provide oral and written testimony if elected by the governing body.



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2024 BOARD OF FORESTRY EVENTS

Field tours, work sessions, and special meetings may be organized throughout the calendar year

January 3* and 4	Meeting	Department Headquarters, Salem
March 6* and 7	Meeting	Location to be determined
April 24 and 25	Retreat	Location to be determined
June 5* and 6	Meeting	Location to be determined
September 4* and 5	Meeting	Department Headquarters, Salem
October 16 and 17	Retreat	Location to be determined

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