****Pursuant to public notice made by news release with statewide distribution, a committee meeting of the Committee for Family Forestlands [an advisory body to the Oregon Board of Forestry with authority established in Oregon Revised Statute 527.650] was convened on March 19, 2019 in the Santiam Room of the ODF Operations Building, 2600 State Street, Salem, Oregon

**DRAFT MINUTES**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***CFF Committee members participating:*** | ***ODF Staff:*** |
| Kyle Abraham, Deputy Chief ODF Private Forests Division, Committee Secretary  Evan Barnes, Committee Chair, SW Landowner Rep. (Voting)  John Peel, EO Landowner Rep. (Voting)  Gilbert Shibley, Landowner-At-Large (Voting)  Bonnie Shumaker, Landowner, NW Landowner Rep. (Voting)  Kaola Swanson, Environmental Rep. Ex-Officio (Pacific Forest Trust)  Rex Storm, AOL/OTFS Ex-Officio Forest Operators  Julie Woodward, OFRI Ex-Officio (by phone)  Jim James, OSWA Executive Director Ex-Officio  Glenn Ahrens, OSU College of Forestry Ext. Ex-Officio (By phone)  Brad Siemens, USFS State & Private Forestry Ex-Officio (filling in for Lind) | Susan Dominique, Committee Administrative Support  Danny Norlander, Forest Health Survey & Monitoring Specialist/Food Plot Rule Process Coordinator & PF Bills Manager!  Lena Tucker, Deputy State Forester  Jennifer Weikel, Wildlife Biologist  Christine Buhl, Entomologist |
| ***Members not attending:*** | ***Guests:*** |
| Linda Lind, USFS State & Private Forestry Ex-Officio  S. Mark Vroman, Industry Rep. (Voting) Hampton Family Forests | Barrett Brown, OSWA member  Daniel Leavell, OSU Forestry Extension |

1. **Welcome and Review of Agenda – Evan Barnes, Chair**

The meeting was called to order at 9:10am. Barnes welcomed participants and gave a summary of the day’s agenda soliciting any changes in topics or order of presentation.

1. **Introductions/Roll Call**

(See participant list above)

1. **Approval of the February 2019 Minutes**

Barnes asked if there were any adjustments or changes to the minutes for February and no changes were offered. So he called for a Motion. Shibley motioned for acceptance and approval of the minutes as submitted and Shumaker seconded that motion. All present were in favor, the motion carried.

1. **Public Comment**

Barnes asked for any public comment and none was offered. Then Barnes shared what his experience was with the recent snow event both as a landowner and Board member of the Douglas Electric Coop.

“*On February 24th we lost every meter in the entire district! 8300 members, 10,000 meters. As of this morning there was still 150 people out, $9.5 million dollars in expenses. Just incredible damage! Poles, wires, substations, everything from the snow. And the forest floor is littered with combustible material. And I don’t see any efforts to try to get that cleaned up by individuals. A lot of it is steep lower elevation land. And there are madrone, oak, firs all over the place just like a carpet. Trees down. And then others are busted off that are going to die*.”

1. **Private Forests Division Update – Kyle Abraham**

Abraham led off by noting that the ODF presentation to the Ways and Means Committee was scheduled during the week of the snow storm February 25th to the 27th. The first day was an Agency overview and talk about the Protection Division. The second day focused on the State Forests Division and Private Forests Division presentations and ending with a presentation by the Administrative Division and summary of the Governor’s Recommended Budget. He reported that it all went really well. Some CFF members also provided public testimony on behalf of the Department. So next steps for the Department will begin when the Legislative Budget is received sometime in May. They are also preparing for the Harvest Tax Bill (HB 2073) which has been introduced in the Revenue Committee. Staff are anticipating and preparing for that hearing sometime in the next few weeks. He noted that there was a difference between the GRB to split the Harvest Tax revenue to the General Fund at 50/50 when the Agency submitted the Bill at 60/40. To bring it to 50/50 would require an amendment. James commented speaking for OSWA that they were adamantly opposed to the Governor’s shift in fire funding. Abraham shared that the trend over time on the Harvest tax is for increases tied to the CPI (Consumer Price Index) adjusting for inflation. He also reported that during the Ways and Means presentation Representative Pam Marsh mentioned developing a package for immediate Agency needs for the coming fire season. ODF Exec Staff have had several key visits with new legislators briefing them on Private Forest Administration particularly in regards to forest practices such as pesticide application. State Forester, Daugherty gave an informational presentation to the House Environment and Energy Committee emphasizing that Oregon’s land use laws, with the Forest Practices Act and voluntary measures by forestland owners are providing the highest water quality results on Oregon resource lands.

Summarizing the agenda for March BOF meeting, Abraham reported that OSU, Jim Rivers and the Dean of the College of Forestry came and presented a little bit about the Marbled Murrelet research that they have been doing. Operator of the Year presentations were on the agenda as well. Three Operators one from each Area: Southern, Northwest Oregon and Eastern Oregon. Operators were encouraged to attend and share this time with their crews and family. The Board members appreciate the positive work and message of the Program and welcome it as a lighter topic than they traditionally deal with. The Committee for Family Forestlands also had been granted time on the March agenda to provide information to the Board on the Additional Dwelling Allowance HB 2469 before the Legislature. Evan Barnes, Bonnie Shumaker, Jim James and Mariel Darzen from 1000 Friends of Oregon provided the informational update and voiced their support. Abraham shared that one of the messages that he gleaned from what Chair Imeson said was that CFF, OSWA and 1000 Friends should work together over the next year to come up with a solution that works for all parties. James offered that the more recent collaboration between 1000 Friends and OSWA is continuing to find common ground in their parallel efforts. Members discussed some of the more common questions that needed to be addressed such as defining a normal income for forest resource lands and how much active management was actually necessary in trying to equate Agriculture’s criteria for their second dwelling exemptions with OSWA’s bill. Also questions regarding how much work is happening on a regular basis? And fire mitigation issues created with placing an additional structure on the land. He advocated for members to consider how to answer the most likely questions that will be asked. All and all, Abraham thought that members provided a great presentation that was well-received by the Board.

Looking ahead to the April 24th Board meeting, he shared that the OFRI Values and Beliefs Study that tracks public opinion on forest management issues is on that agenda. Staff has also been asked to provide a summary of ODF’s climate change considerations to provide information framing a Board discussion on the subject. The Private Forests Division is on the agenda in April to present the status of the Marbled Murrelet Specified Resource Site rule analysis. The required technical report is close to being finalized based on the Expert Review. Staff will be asking the Board to Accept/or Reject that Report as part of the rule process.

As members were concerned about the structure of the Governor’s Wildfire Council at the last meeting and they were provided a list of names of those on the Council. The first Council meeting had been the day before but Abraham reported it was a formative meeting providing a general overview of the problem statements. A lot of the appointed members on that Council weren’t necessarily familiar with the issue. The Council was convened by the Governor out of recognition of the complexity of the broad impacts Large fires have statewide and desire to take a more holistic view of how the State handles wildfire impacts and agency roles. CFF had submitted a letter to the GNRO advocating for better forest landowner and fire expert representation. James mentioned that there will be three sub-committees formed under the larger council for one each focusing on Mitigation, Suppression and Community Recovery. ODF will be support staffing those individual efforts. Abraham affirmed that staff will email information to CFF on future Council meeting dates. He reiterated that ODF is not driving this review, nor the ones in charge. ODF staff are just providing support. He pointed out that ongoing information would be available on the Governor’s website including meeting materials.

Regarding the current status and next steps of the Siskiyou Streamside Riparian Review Report, the report was sent out for comment and staff have been working on the updates in response to those provided comments. Staff are continuing to accept comments until the end of March. After updating the report, they will take that information to the Board in June. The Program anticipates that they will be asking the Board to make a decision whether or not the material will provide enough information to make a decision whether the rules are working or not working to help them determine where the monitoring focus and priorities need to be considering stream temperature and Desired Future Condition in the Siskiyou georegion. Abraham offered that his plan is to have Terry Frueh and Marganne Allen on CFF’s April agenda to talk about the process.

Tucker offered a little more information on the recent Private Forests Division staff changes. She reminded the group that she had accepted the position of Deputy State Forester back in January and described the transition plan put into place for whoever got that position. Travis Medema the Eastern Oregon Area Director, has been the Acting Deputy. Most of his role right now is focused on the Legislative Session with the State Forester. He is also staffing the sub-committee of the Wildfire Council for Suppression. So with that additional work they are going to transition sooner than anticipated. Another key thing is recruiting and hiring of the new Private Forest Division Chief. Her plan is to have the new Division Chief take over duties by May 1st which frees her up to transition with Travis and get ready for fire season. She’s been focused on the Division’s Budget through the Legislative process and the myriad of bills effecting the Private Forest Division and Board of Forestry. A few of the duties as Deputy State Forester is serving as Ex-Officio to the OFRI Board and role of Agency Government-to-Government liaison. They are currently holding interviews to select a new Division Chief. Members asked some questions about the preparation for fire season. She explained that we are getting everyone in place and trained by June, ready by mid-July. The Incident Management Team training will be in a couple of weeks. Good news is that ODF has fully rostered *three* Agency Incident Management Teams (IMTs) and are working on the deployment process and ensuring that new people have the proper training and qualifications.

1. **Legislative Update/Dwelling Allowance – Danny Norlander**

Norlander pointed out the legislative ODF bill priority list is getting smaller paring it down to those that the Agency is watching more closely. He reminded everybody that this Session began way back in January. Public hearings have been going on in the Committees but all work sessions having to be scheduled by the March 29th. If a bill isn’t scheduled its “dead” unless it’s in a few select committees or the President of the Senate decides to pull it out of the bucket and throw it back in. So the week and half between March 29th and April 9th is when there are a lot of public hearings and work sessions scheduled in tandem. April 9th is the drop dead date for the first Committee. If it doesn’t make it through the first committee by then, it’s dead. So by April 9th it has to get through that first Chamber work session. After that bills go to the floor for a vote and those bills that pass are referred to the Second Chamber. Bills have by May 10th to have a work session scheduled in the Second Chamber. If the bill starts in the House by May 24th it will have had to go through those Committees on the Senate side by May 24th, it’s dead. So there is a month between that and June 21st when everything will have gone through the floor in both Chambers and sent to the Governor’s desk to be signed. Their target finish date is June 14th but constitutionally, they have to be done by June 30th.

To clarify Norlander restated that the first thing that happens is a public hearing in the assigned committee for a bill. After the public hearing it needs to be scheduled for work sessions by April 9th where the legislators discuss the bill and any proposed amendments. Amendments are introduced and then voted on whether to pass to the Senate or not. But if it’s in Ways and Means, or one of the Revenue committees, Rules or one of the joint committees then it continues on. It doesn’t have the same deadline. But for the specific Chamber Committees that is when the deadline is. If it passes that Chamber floor it moves to the Second Chamber and the public hearing and work session process starts all over again.

There is not a hearing date for the Harvest Tax Bill yet but as it resides in the Revenue Committee that could stretch it into June. As the members were interested in the efforts regarding additional dwellings, Norlander went through the known status of a variety of ADU bills sponsored. HB 2225 regarding the template test dwellings sponsored by 1000 Friends had a hearing on Feb. 5th but hasn’t had a work session scheduled yet. OSWA’s bill HB 2469 had a hearing that afternoon. Another HB 2363 defines an historic home as any home built prior to 1974 which would consequently allow additional building. Hopefully it doesn’t. And then working down the list, ones that are specific to Accessory Dwellings and forest dwellings are 2225, so that’s the forest template dwelling that 1000 Friends came and talked about back in January. It has had a public hearing on February 5th and it hasn’t had a work session scheduled since then. So they have a little while longer to schedule that. But we will see if that happens. And then 2469 is this afternoon. It’s not on this list. I don’t have control over this list. Another one that could be of interest is HB 2363 which basically establishes an historic home being any home built prior to 1974. That one has had a public hearing on February 12th, but no work session has been scheduled yet. Yet another is HB 3369 that establishes parcel sizes for resource lands cannot be smaller than the average size for that type for an area. So if you are in an area where the average size is 160 acres, you wouldn’t be able to subdivide smaller than 160. If it was 20 acres on average, you could subdivide down to 20.

On the Senate side, Senate Bill 88 is on rural ADUs and also had a work session scheduled with a dash 2 amendment which will be discussed. That is more related to wildfire resiliency with ADUs and things like that. The original bill had ODF creating wildfire risk maps. That role has been transferred to OSU Department of Forestry. The DCBS is the other party involved in that aspect and the dash two. That was a committee bill from the Environment and Natural Resources Committee. But prior to the session the Protection Division was involved in that discussion. It has size limits for the additional building of 900 square feet and a bunch of other stuff, building requirements and what not. SB 930 would allow counties to approve ADU’s and also deals with wildfire issues related to that.

HB 2495 revises the Harvest Tax, specifically the OFRI side of things and creates a Wildfire Suppression Fund. Passage would change the way we allocate suppression funds through the fire season. Again that one has not had a public hearing. But there is actually another one similar to that, HB 3080 which is basically the same idea just addressed differently. James commented that HB 3080 would take money away from OFRI and put it into a fire fund. Norlander continued with other bills of interest:

* + - * HB 2656 which prohibits certain forest operations on forestlands that supply drinking water for public water systems. It would ban clear-cutting, road building and the use of any herbicides on about 80% of the private forestlands in the State.
* HB 2944 is related to that to establish a task force on Oregon Domestic Use Water Supplies.
* HB 3044 is pesticide reporting requirement to record application conditions.
* HB 3042 allows local jurisdiction to put restrictions on aerial application of pesticides, not specific to forestlands, its all lands.
* SB 931 is one that would require reporting in FERNS for pesticides, we are assessing how that would impact FERNS at this point.
* SB 926 would prohibit aerial application on State Forests. There’s at least three bills related to neonicotinoids for pollinators and bees, banning the use of those not necessarily used on forests but the Department is following.
* James shared that for OSWA HB 2152 is being pushed which eliminates all the special forest tax assessments through creation or adjustment of sunset dates for certain property tax expenditure provisions. There are eight of them that would sunset in 2026. (Norlander noted that it wasn’t a new bill but something introduced in 2011 re-introduced in Sessions since then). He emphasized that it would be devastating to forest landowners as it would strip away any incentive to own forestland. Apparently this session’s version sunsets every special assessment there is except for Ag.
* HB 2659 sets definitions for different sets of forestland. Natural, semi-natural, non-forestland which includes recent harvest; and then managed timber repealing special assessments and property tax exemptions for forestlands covered by timber plantations to a certain height and non-forested land. So penalizes anyone that has reprod versus ‘natural’ forests.

Storm shared that there are a large number of bills that OFIC is lobbying and tracking that effect small business and forest operations. One on independent contracting and taxation; employment; transportation bills and those sorts of things that would alter the world of business operations. His opinion was that this legislative session appears to have more dysfunctional and obstructive bills than what most Oregonians would consider as good business practices.

BREAK

1. **OSU Extension Budget Proposal – Daniel Leavell, OSU Forestry Extension**

Leavell was eager to present an overview of the Oregon State University budget ask and began providing some context to their proposal by describing the pioneering efforts the Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership (KLFHP). That effort brought private forestland owners and BLM together with ODF to accomplish some cross-boundary prescribed burning and other forest treatment efforts on a landscape scale. They began their efforts in 1993 as a non-profit with 3 bylaws, 3 voting members and a budget of $50/year. Their efforts kept growing and in 2000 the Klamath Lake Forest Health Partnership published a book on landscape scale management giving advice to private landowners on how to work with government partners. Beginning with the Barry Point Fire in 2014 which affected those counties, in 2015 the KLFHP wanted to act. So the Forest Service Fremont-Winema with OSU Extension and ODF put together a summit at the Running Y Resort and invited about 120 to 150 participants in the area similarly concerned about natural resource management. Tribes, NACASI, Feds, State, County, private industrial, private non-industrial. During that one day summit they tackled the question of how to increase the scope and scale of landscape restoration to meet the growing issues they all faced. It was agreed upon that the Partnership would run point on creating an environments where Klamath and Lake Counties would increase the scope and scale of landscape based risk mitigation, forest health, and wildlife habitat management. They recruited NRCS, USFS, ODF and local area entities and agencies under a mission to do outreach and help facilitate getting more work done on the ground with solid, science based risk mitigation. KLFHP would act as the hub around which each representative could address and answer questions on how to break down the barriers to cross-boundary efforts. The next effort was to try a pilot project with the principles they set up.

The Fremont-Winema had already completed a NEPA assessment and had a record of decision on about 150,000 acres north of Lakeview. There were about 38,000 acres of private lands surrounding that with about 25 landowners. It took about 6 months to complete an entire map and inventory of all 38,000 acres of private land regardless of ownership. And where they needed ground-based information, ground validation they did education and outreach to the private landowners on working together to facilitate economies of scale, prioritizing forest health, wildfire and risk mitigation, fuels reduction, wildlife habitat. They began submitting grants to get work done on the ground and were getting awarded.

In the first year after obtaining the grants, the Fremont-Winema treated 20,000 of federal land and we treated 6000 acres of private land. Treatments included all slash reduction, juniper control, commercial thinning, pre-commercial thinning, aspen restoration, mountain mahogany restoration, as well as streamside restoration, (because the watershed councils were a partner). So they got OWEB dollars, they got Joint Chiefs dollars, Sage Grouse dollars and Mule Deer dollars and with that OSU was able to work with ODF, hiring an ODF forester to be the implementation manager. OSU Extension and ODF assisted every single one of those landowners over 30,000 acres in the development of a land management plan. Every one of them. Short term goals, long term goals. Why they should work together. Why they should work with the Forest Service. How to build on economies of scale. ODF worked through agreements with the Good Neighbor Authority, Farm Bill Authority, and Wyden Amendment. Watershed Councils filled in as a non-profit, where ODF and the Forest Service couldn’t. So each agency and entity had its strengths, and each one had its weaknesses. Most of our folks stretched the limits of what they were able to do working outside regular position authorities but enhanced their program limits through those partnership agreements. The outcomes were that the on-the-ground efforts put people to work, put money into the economy. Stores did better, people started seeing the beneficial aspects of log trucks coming into town and what that meant. All side circumstances of having a sound, resilient, strengthened landscape. Ecosystems benefited. The community benefited. Economy benefited. It’s a successful and ongoing effort now.

So, OSU saw that these types of partnership could bring benefits statewide under this model. In the meantime they published that process. *Planning and Implementing Cross-boundary, Landscape-scale Restoration and Wildfire Risk Reduction Projects: A Guide to Achieving the Goals of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy – OSU, University of Idaho, Washington State University PNW 707 – October 2018*. Printed copies of the publication are expensive but it is online in the OSU Extension Catalog Library (Publication #BMW707). The publication details a process that works and they felt could be replicated. OSU Forest and Natural Resource Extension as party to this realized that there was benefit in perhaps expanding their mission to mitigating the destructive potential of Large fires in the State. They put together a Fire Science Core Curriculum and within two years they put together a five module set of Fire Science Core Curriculum that they could take out and teach the basic awareness of Fire Management, Fire Prevention, Fire History, Fire Behavior. In 2017 they took another vote saying, ‘let’s build on this program and make the OSU Fire Program as robust as the OSU Forestry Program to become Forestry, Natural Resources *and* Fire Extension Program. They put the proposal together and voluntarily started to determine what would be needed, how to educate, outreach, make aware, and instill prevention activities. They published educational aids, Fact Sheets, taught workshops with the concept of landscape scale efforts assimilated into that as a proof of concept. He proposed if they are successful with these landscape efforts they could be successful addressing fire. OSU has an opportunity to team up with ODF, NRCS, Forest Service to assist, facilitate and carry out these landscape efforts across the state. As Extension they are a neutral party uninvolved with rules and regulations and having a good relationship with landowners could facilitate and help implement cross-boundary pre-fire response plans. Issues like inequities associated with liability. Investment in data mapping and risk assessments. Essentially, Extension wants to put together a fire specialist, and funding for forest fire agents statewide to carry out all the steps to educate, outreach, assist, facilitate new partnerships, strengthen partnerships that are already there, create consistency and economies of scale across the state to deal with the fire issue from a land management perspective. So the College of Forestry had two asks within Senate Bill 257 one for the Research Laboratory and one for the Extension Service. Unfortunately, the fire program and Extension, is just one little piece, a third of a third of OSU’s budget ask. That bill asks for an appropriation of moneys from General Fund to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission for agricultural experiment and branch stations, Oregon State University Extension Service and Forest Research Laboratory programs.

Siemens agreed that this whole approach is completely in line the way the Forest Service is continuing to move. What the Forest Service is calling Shared Stewardship, basically has three parts. First to prioritize what landscapes are of shared interest. To find the right tools and the right places to put them. And to get the ground projects in place. They continue to point to the Klamath Partnership model as an example of where this has worked on a landscape. Siemens wanted to point out that this is exactly where the Forest Service and leadership are trying to get to. Leavell responded in appreciation and noted that this is not an academic effort but an effort leading towards making a difference on the ground in the scope and scale where it can matter.

But to do this right and honestly he offered that institutional cultures may need to change. Those on the front lines of climate change need to grow, need to learn, need to accept change and move forward proactively. He reminded those present that the main work of these original partnership efforts were done by individuals outside of their job description. He ventured to say that instead of just occasionally “going above and beyond” we should make these efforts part of our core business, a funded program of work.

James reiterated that the new Governor’s Wildfire Response Council has convened the three sub-committees and thought it obvious that this information would be extremely valuable to the ‘Mitigation’ sub-committee. Abraham voiced appreciation for these efforts and hoped to have an opportunity to leverage some of these ideas. Leavell was enthusiastic about furthering partnership with ODF to leverage each other’s strengths in locating and implementing a similar partnership effort in NW Oregon.

There was then a favorable discussion of support for the OSU Proposal (SB 257) that had a hearing that day. Norlander shared that it’s currently in the Education Committee and needs to go to Ways and Means. So there will be another opportunity to testify. James, (who attended the hearing) thought that the Education Committee was very receptive and had several people testify in favor, but budgets are tight. Leavell reiterated that we shouldn’t confine our efforts to only the pieces required to move ahead but also to get results on the ground to meet the urgency we face as a state. Siemens included that the other piece of this effort is the ODF Forest Action Plan that is required to be eligible under the Farm Bill for State and Private Forestry funding. The Plan is due June 30th, 2020. So finding those planning tracks to imbed with this landscape-scale process will make the Plan as actionable as possible. Leavell was encouraged by the suggestion thought it made total sense to have the landscape-scale concept was put forward within ODF’s Action Plan. Barnes offered to contact Carol Whipple an appointed member of the Governor’s Wildfire Council regarding the OSU process and also suggested that the CFF could write a letter to the Council referring to the publication as a resource for deliberation. Shumaker emphasized that the letter should focus on getting results on the ground.

1. **Marbled Murrelet Rule Analysis – Jennifer Weikel**

Weikel provided an update of the ongoing Marbled Murrelet Rulemaking Analysis. She set the tone for the newer members with a little bit of background. That in 2016 the Board of Forestry was petitioned to initiate rulemaking for this species under the FPA rules. Rulemaking analysis requires a technical report which lays out the background and biology of the species as well as answers to very specific questions and other required content. In April 2018 she presented a draft technical report to the Board. The Board instructed the Program to move forward with an Expert Review of this report and then in November she presented the results of that review to the Board by summarizing the comments she received from the Expert panel and addressed the changes in the draft report. Since that time she has been working up the final Technical Report to present to the Board in April (2019).

OSU was on the Board agenda to present their Marbled Murrelet research. She suggested that the presentation video is already available on the Board’s webpage. They shared all the multiple aspects of the project, one of the more interesting of which is they are capturing these birds at sea and tagging them so they could follow them inland to their nest sites and then doing a more comprehensive project to describe nesting sites and place video cameras on the nest. They monitor for predation, nest failure causes, etc. The first year of the project, they put 61 tags on birds but since it was a bad ocean year, none of the tagged birds came into nest within the radio range. So eventually they figured out that a lot of the birds were moving really far north up into Washington, and really far south into California. The original thought was that the population was relatively discreet and stable but what they found was at least some percentage of these birds who aren’t nesting aren’t sticking around. So that realization has obvious implications for more population monitoring. Researchers tagged 76 birds in the second year and some came in to nest and they documented 8 new nest locations. Which doesn’t sound like much but before this last year there were only 73 known nests. They really bumped up the sample size. Their study also reported finding the first nest in the U.S. on a Big Leaf Maple as well as the first recorded predation by a Red-tailed Hawk. 5 of the 8 new nest sites failed and 3 were successful. Where they did expect to find predation from Corvis they couldn’t verify that based upon such a small sample size. And again they found a fairly large proportion of the birds moved south and north again. But that wasn’t just because of seasonal bad ocean conditions but that birds that didn’t nest are moving long distances.

On April 24th we’ll be back in front of the Board to present the final version of the Technical Report. There isn’t any significant difference from the draft but she has updated the population numbers because of new content that reviewers wanted incorporated into the report along with just lots of housekeeping edits. In April the Program will be asking the Board for a decision to Accept or Reject the report, which is one of the requirements of the Administrative Rules. If they reject it they can request more pieces of information.

In answer to some members’ questions, Weikel reported that the known nests in Oregon range from Clatsop County all the way down to Curry County. But the current known nests, they were specifically looking for and capturing birds off the ocean in Newport. The 8 known nests are all in the Siuslaw National Forest. Birds that are nesting aren’t flying along distances, they are coming in right off the capture which is generally late March/early April and tracking May through September.

The next required steps in rulemaking is describing what the resource site would be for the species; what protections are warranted; and to evaluate any conflicts forest operations may cause and resulting in nest failures. So what is in the Technical Report is not a policy recommendation. Considering the resource site definition and potential protections would describe a range of options from the most conservative approach of protecting known nest trees to the most non-restrictive, precautionary move of protecting the actual habitat until it is determined not to be occupied. Weikel envisioned that after April, if the Board accepts the tech report then that becomes sort of a static document. But there is no reason why we can’t include in other information as we go as such as would be part of the Department’s Adaptive Management Process.

Members and guest landowner pointed out the lack of certainty about why nests were failing and research efforts struggling over behaviors and migration patterns and pointed out that this is the beginning of OSU’s research effort. Swanson argued that it seems to be an argument for a precautionary approach to rulemaking. James agreed one step farther that as the populations appear stable there is no reason to take any action yet. Even whether the birds return to specific nest sites or have high site fidelity has not been established. Weikel didn’t think we have enough information to say that they come back to the same tree year after year. But we know they come back at some level.

LUNCH

1. **Bark Beetle Update – Christine Buhl**

Buhl began the update by shifting any perceived villain in the beetle outbreaks, from the beetles to the environmental conditions effecting the trees that cause those populations to increase. The fact is that oftentimes these are native insects that are normally present on our landscape and they just become a problem because their populations spike when provided an abundance of food that is not defended. A healthy tree can provide some defense against beetles with its pitch but when there is significant storm damage such as ice or wind breakage or blow down those stressed or damaged trees attract those native insects. The beetles feed on the inner bark (phloem) and cambium layers and the feeding activity especially with the mass attack girdles the tree’s vascular tissues. Along with the damage beetles introduce a fungus that further clots the vascular tissues and hastens the trees death. The way bark beetles activity is influenced is mainly through chemical signaling. They identify a host tree through chemical volatiles that come from the host that they like. Once dug in, the beetle sends out a pheromone to attract a mate. Those pheromones attract more and more beetles until they reach a certain saturation point in a host tree when that occurs they send out a repellent pheromone. The host trees favored by the beetle are Douglas-fir and Pine and especially with fresh damaged and down trees. High risk scenarios seen statewide for beetle infestation is drought-stress in Douglas-fir. (Readily identified by thinning canopies and flagging of branches from drought.) Trees in drought stress release a ‘stressed’ chemical signal that is very attractive to the beetle as it indicates that tree is less well defended. Pitch is a protective mechanical barrier to bark beetles and contains chemicals that can either be toxic or repellent to the beetle. So when a tree doesn’t have enough moisture to create that pitch, there is a smell that is released that is very attractive to the beetles. The beetles attack and there is no pitch that they need to bypass. The other high risk scenario is blowdown events. When there is large diameter Douglas-fir blown down the Douglas-Fir beetle is really attracted to that and then will attack the drought-stressed adjacent standing trees. She shared that the trend is for continued drought in the state and even if there is a break from higher than normal temperatures and/or we get additional precipitation, we can still expect to see more trees that are dying, either from current drought conditions or from previous drought conditions or any sequential periods of stress. After vascular tissues collapse fluid cannot move through the tree. Atrophy of those tissues cause die back of roots and then in turn that reduces the amount of resources available to take up nutrients for growth and defense.

Looking at the previous five years, technically speaking, since 2012 we’ve been in a drought. Even with average annual temperatures statewide near normal. But it’s not so much total hot days or very hot temperatures, but the sequential stress over time. Abraham asked whether there was a common definition of drought. Buhl replied that she uses “frequent or consecutive hot days, and lower inconsistent precipitation” but she wasn’t aware of an official definition. Norlander shared that there *is* an accepted definition of drought and actually two different types: meteorologic drought, and hydrologic drought. Hydrologic drought is related to ground water storage in the soil. And the meteorologic drought factors are how much is coming down from the sky. There are specific definitions at a national level describing drought types.

“*Drought, on the other hand, is the*absence*of water. It is a creeping phenomenon that slowly sneaks up and impacts many sectors of the economy, and operates on many different time scales. As a result, the climatological community has defined four types of drought: 1) meteorological drought, 2) hydrological drought, 3) agricultural drought, and 4) socioeconomic drought. Meteorological drought happens when dry weather patterns dominate an area. Hydrological drought occurs when low water supply becomes evident, especially in streams, reservoirs, and groundwater levels, usually after many months of meteorological drought. Agricultural drought happens when crops become affected. And socioeconomic drought relates the supply and demand of various commodities to drought. Meteorological drought can begin and end rapidly, while hydrological drought takes much longer to develop and then recover.”*– from NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/monitoring-references/dyk/drought-definition>

There is online tracking that is accessible called the West Wide Drought Tracker which comes from the Western Regional Climate Center at <https://www.drought.gov/drought/data-source/western-regional-climate-center>. There you can pull up a map by any date span and see the breakdown. The ‘normal’ that they are using is from 1895 to 2010 and obviously if you compare it to a different set of normals on a different span of years you can get some different data results. She offered that those interested can also get a monthly drought report listserve email (from the Water Resources Dept.) which is a great way to stay on top of things without being a climatologist and crunching numbers yourself.

Continuing the beetle discussion, she emphasized that these insects are very small but because they mass attack they can kill the trees. Their preference is the most stressed trees, (consequently less well defended) but they don’t fly far, just one tree to the next. They prefer blow down material large diameter stuff. So they hit it when it’s fresh but not when dried out. The first generation develops in the blow down and they emerge in April to attack adjacent standing trees. When diagnosing bark beetle presence the tree will have a reddish brown frass (sawdust) as they dig into the bark not the wood. If the frass is white it is a woodborer. Then if you peel some bark back, a Doug-fir beetle has a large gallery 5 to 10” in length running straight down the tree. Sometimes you will see pitch streams defending the tree, unless the tree is too stressed. Typically, it’s not landscape level mortality like we’ve seen with insects like Mountain Pine Beetle for example, but you can definitely get pockets of mortality and if you’re a small woodland, a pocket is a lot to you. Typically these outbreaks don’t last longer than 1 to 3 years but considering that many stands that are already drought stressed or damaged by disease makes them more susceptible to attack and provides more food for the beetles to continue their cycle. It’s relatively rare west of the Cascades for outbreaks to continue past three years, but that’s not to say that it couldn’t happen especially with the stresses that our trees are enduring right now.

When managing for bark beetles the rule of thumb is if you have 3 trees down per acre (of 10” and above dbh), it presents a risk of attracting bark beetles. But given that some stands are really drought stressed already consider removing those downed logs before beetles attack that first April. If removal of downed wood isn’t feasible you can apply MCH. MCH is an anti-aggregation pheromone which can be applied to standing trees to get some protection against the beetles emerging from the logs the next April. Its best is to address it *before* the first April following that storm event. If you can’t, then the 2nd April. She emphasized that it is always a good mitigation practice to remove the struggling, suppressed, sick and damaged trees because those are always going to be more attractive to the Doug-fir Beetle. MCH is a synthetic form of the pheromone smell that beetles release when trees are no longer available. It’s a general use pesticide so you don’t need a license to apply it or buy it and it’s readily available online but don’t delay as stocks get low this late in the season. Obviously this product is going to be more efficacious if it is paired with the silvicultural treatment, removing the downed logs, removing suppressed trees but because it’s a pheromone specifically for Doug-fir Bark Beetle the non-target impacts are minimal.

Having introduced some of the precursors stressing Doug-fir she noted those same situations apply to pine stands. The IPS beetle, Pine Engraver, Pine IPS, California 5-Spine are all various types of IPS beetles attacking pine. Unlike Doug-fir beetle, this insect reproduces really fast and has a lot of offspring so it can be more problematic. The high risk scenarios for this insect are drought stress, so anytime the average precipitation is 25% below the norm. The scenario she sees the most is over-stocked Valley Pine. Years ago we told folks to grow Valley Pine but there is no market for it now. And so why thin if you can’t afford to? Consequently there are stands of smaller diameter packed pines that IPS beetles love. They love the small diameter stuff and when stands are packed together and out competing one another they are just more stressed. Especially when it comes to moisture. Fresh slash is another big one. So like the blow down, these bark beetles like this material that is not defended, it was just snipped off and its fresh, not years old. They hit that first and develop in that and then hit adjacent trees. The bark is typically thinner in those smaller diameters. They like to hit the top of the trees or branches in large trees or just hit smaller diameter trees on the central bole. They can develop in 2 months and they can have multiple broods per generation. Their populations can build up really fast. Diagnosis is similar you’ll look for that reddish brown frass. But it’s very rare that you will see a pitch tube, mostly, because trees that are attacked are probably drought stressed but also because these smaller diameters don’t have as many resin ducts close together to push those beetles out. Also under the bark you might see an x or y shaped gallery. People tend to see the dead tops then the frass and maybe they will peel it back and see the galleries. So this is the slash/IPS cycle. So if you have this slash material or breakage from operations or storms remember within that 3” to 8” diameter range this beetle will attack starting in April but go all the way through October. Once they develop they will move to the standing trees and again they don’t like to fly far so it’s just to the closest tree. So for pine Buhl advised to try and do pre-commercial thinning with sufficiently wide spacing, even wider for droughty conditions, to avoid overstocking pine sites. Then the slash management is really essential. Usually the volatiles from slash will break down very quickly but that doesn’t mean that the beetles aren’t already there. But it’s usually about 2 weeks till the smell from slash drops off. If you leave slash on the ground October through December, that’s enough time for that material to dry out and break down so by April the beetles can’t attack it. Outside of that window of time might not be sufficient to make that material unusable so we say anytime outside of October – December you’ve got to burn, chip, masticate, or even bury material. There is no anti-aggregation pheromone for IPS beetles. Tiny exit holes indicate that they have already left the tree to go on to the next. If there is a bunch of woodpecker damage they are likely long gone. Red trees, the same. If you see a bunch of woodpecker damage, those beetles are most likely long gone. If you see red trees, those beetles are most likely long gone. If you see a red top, look to the next green tree, is frass evident? The Private Forests Forest Health Program has resources pertaining to this presentation. Fact sheets on Storms and Forest Health; MCH; Slash Management Doug-fir beetle, and the IPS Beetle.

In answer to a member’s questions, Buhl emphasized that it is the tree stress that attracts the beetles. The Mountain Pine Beetle and Western Pine Beetle are different biologically from the IPS beetles but they all attack and do the same thing. The major difference is IPS produce multiple generations every two months. Buhl concluded by saying that to mitigate these insect population spikes we have to enhance a tree’s resiliency. But outside of increasing the distance between trees, with an ongoing drought there is not much you can do. Some years are worse than others. She qualified that by noting that there are tons of bark beetles that are not major tree killers. And wood boring beetles are not killing anything. They are just aiding in the decomposition and nutrient cycling process that is necessary.

1. **Incentives Update – Danny Norlander**

Norlander filled in for Nate Agalzoff providing an update on the Incentives Program filling in for Nate Agalzoff. ODF has an agreement with the American Forest Foundation (AFF) to assist with management planning specifically targeted towards smaller landowners. Management plans are the first step in being eligible to apply for NRCS cost-share opportunities. ODF has set expectations for the number of plans written. They are currently targeting NE and SW Oregon and then some scattered around John Day and Central Oregon and down in the Klamath/Lake area. As an agency we are getting ramped up and this year’s target is to have about 40 plans done through this Agreement and continue to add more each year. This could potentially extend even further if AFF gets more funding. (ODF is a sub-grantee on this project.) This opportunity ties in real nicely with our NRCS project work on the ground. Acres with management plans on them do better in a lot of respects. So, that’s a big effort getting underway. The cash grant is split up to ensure program capacity to meet small landowner needs, so some of it has gone to Wallowa Resources for planning work in the northeast. The Uniform Plan template ensures that whoever writes the plans will provide the necessary information to meet NRCS requirements. He added that there are funds as well for bark beetle prevention projects that Christine Buhl is promoting.

In addition we get a little bit of funding from the Forest Service each year and Stewardship Funds for our technical assistance work including some plan writing funds. He suggested that maybe Brad can offer what the future looks like for that funding. He was aware of a potential revamp of the federal program sometime down the road which may affect how much we do in the future.

Siemens shared that he and Lena Tucker, Deputy State Forester were on a Forest Stewardship Modernization Committee at the National level which was driven largely by appropriator’s remarks in previous bills. The Senate is the one that is pushing for prioritized outcomes from the Forest Stewardship Program. He admitted frustration with conflicting goals between what they authorized us to do with this program and what they are asking us for now. Where it was initially plans and outreach to unengaged landowners they are now wanting focus on those actions taking place in identified watersheds. The Modernization Committee is are working closely with the State Foresters, so the State Foresters will have a final sort of vote on whether this approach is approved or not. Vicki Christensen who’s now our Chief of the Forest Service, formerly Deputy Chief over State and Private Forestry, was the one that actually recognized this contradiction and advised paying attention to the language that is in the Appropriations bills and make changes so the program is responsive to it. They are now looking at outcomes on priority landscapes. Each State has been asked to identify priority landscapes for the Forest Stewardship Program. States will decide where those priorities are with regards to fire, water, wildlife and jobs. With these new priority areas States will be limited to 50% of the eligible forest stewardship acreage, so basically non-industrial private forestland within the state. The next step will be to focus our federal dollars to those priority areas. The tradeoff with this new authorization is that you don’t have first-come, first served capability with the federal dollars now to engage landowners where they say they need it.

Tucker added that it’s a work in progress. The Modernization Committee is just starting into determining allocation methods, which is going to be key to all the states to get the funding. We distribute our funds statewide to everybody that is interested in getting cost-share funding for Stewardship Plans, our stewardship foresters all have a bit of this funding available to them so that they can do that one-on-one technical outreach outside of their administration of the FPA. Having that flexibility with funding enables us to make those connections with forestland owners. They have emphasized that stewardship funds are the gateway that kick-starts our engagement with forest landowners and opens the door to further engagement in other programs like NRCS, EQIP, things like that.

Siemens continued that the allocation process is complicated and will get even more complicated probably once this goes into effect. There is a performance element to this in which States will be asked how many eligible landowners do you have in the state? How many eligible acres? If you have more eligible acres you get more money. But then the performance element also asks how well do you service those priority areas? How much of your program led to outcomes on the ground within that acreage? So State performing well on a smaller priority landscape can actually do better in the allocation process than States that have identified the entire State as a priority and consequently are not addressing as much of that acreage as a result.

Buhl pointed out that looking at Region 6 historically for Bark Beetle Allocation, we’ve gotten the most dollars for any Region for bark beetle cost-share funds. She asked Brad for an idea of how this new prioritization is going to impact that. He didn’t know but assumed that it is unrelated. He hadn’t heard any speculation about going broader into other program areas.

Tucker offered that she hears the Appropriations Community questioning the Forest Service about what they are actually getting with the funding. All the States talk providing technical assistance but we actually do collect data. We try to tally the information on our entry level contacts regarding the basic business of how to manage your woodland. But what we haven’t been able to do in all the accounting of initial visits is documenting the path that actually led to the creation of a management plan. Did it lead to some type of pre-commercial thinning? Did it lead to a bark beetle treatment or fuels reduction? What on-the-ground activities actually happened as a result of our stewardship contacts? She offered that’s the thing as foresters we struggle with because intuitively you know that if you send Christine out and talk about forest health, it’s going to make a difference. But we aren’t tracking it spatially or with any hard data. Barnard clarified that what was needed was a single identifier that can follow any subsequent activity providing data to answer to those questions. If interested in following up on the selection and allocation methods being discussed in the Modernization effort Tucker encouraged members to write letters to the Senate Appropriations Committee, Oregon Senator Jeff Merkley is on that Committee.

Members were interested in what types of NRCS projects have been discussed. Norlander shared that varied depending upon the Conservation Implementation Strategy (CIS) Areas and identified goals and practices. The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is another cost-share funding opportunity. For forestry there are projects ranging from increasing general forest health, oak woodland preservation, and watershed health. Some projects on the coast are related to salmon habitat or general fish habitat. CISs have a 3 year project timeframe. So, if our local foresters, NRCS, landowners and conservation communities will all come together and say, here’s a resource concern in this area NRCS will develop a CIS regarding that and identifying what kind of project work should be done, whether its thinning, pile burning whatever it happens to be. And there is a whole list of appropriate practices that can be done within those. They develop that list and set the project goals for that and then landowners can apply to NRCS for that CIS Area. ODF works as the technical experts to develop that plan language and pass that onto NRCS. Then that is between NRCS and the landowner.

Swanson asked for an update on the Forest Legacy Program. Siemens reported that they just got the budget from 2018 and Legacy list of ranked projects was delayed but ultimately it was officially announced when they finally got a budget. Ultimately, they got $2.2 million in this fiscal year for the Hood River Fish and Forest Project that Western Rivers and Amy Singh, ODF’s Forest Legacy Coordinator are involved with located on Weyerhaeuser land. For the 2020 cycle Amy Singh actually sat on the federal review panel in D.C. (But she was sworn to silence regarding decisions.) Siemens anticipated difficulty again in getting a project ranking so that applicants can have some certainty regarding their project awards. He shared that he has heard that Oregon did fairly well but they will have to wait and see. The Community Forest Program is another one that he manages and this year they are not doing a Request for Applications but they will be re-considering applications that came in last cycle and going further down the list. He anticipates that funding may reach the Headwaters Community Forest Project in Arch Cape.

Norlander shifted conversation back, showing a map of the Conservation Implementation Strategic locations with interactive points describing projects. Some projects deal with salmon/steelhead; some are fire; some are mule deer and grazing habitat. He wanted to note as well that the Community Assistance Grants which are run through the Fire Program were just vetted and one was approved for northeast and one in Klamath Lake area. Western State Fire Managers Grants are also run through the Protection Division who will announce a request for proposals soon. (RFP was sent out April 4th.) There are also Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) Grants providing other cost-sharing opportunities.

1. **Good of the Order/Meeting Topics**

Barnes asked for any member updates for the Good of the Order. None were offered. Reminders were provided on the upcoming meeting dates established previously. The next meeting is scheduled for April 18th about a week before the next BOF meeting, so there will be opportunity to give members a heads up of the Board’s agenda. Down the line meeting dates are May 16th and June 13th. July 24th is the BOF meeting where the CFF Annual Report is presented to the Board.

Barnes adjourned the meeting at 2:00 pm to facilitate members testifying to the Legislature that afternoon.