

# **DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY**

## **WESTERN OREGON STATE FORESTS HCP SCOPING TEAM**

Wednesday, July 26, 2023, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

By Webinar/Video Conference

### **ATTENDEES**

**Participants:** Jeff Young (NOAA Fisheries), Joe Zisa (USFWS), Rod Krahmer (ODFW), Julie Firman (ODFW), Jiajia Lin (DEQ), Josh Seeds (DEQ), Nick Palazzotto (ODF), Ron Zilli (ODF)

**Technical Consultants and Guests:** Melissa Klungle and Jordan Mayor (ICF)

**Facilitation Team:** Sylvia Ciborowski and Ellen Palmquist (Kearns & West), Cindy Kolomechuk (ODF)

### **WELCOME AND AGENDA REVIEW**

Sylvia Ciborowski, Kearns & West, welcomed Scoping Team (ST) members and reviewed the agenda, which included: 1) Welcome and Agenda Review, 2) Agency and Stakeholder Engagement Updates, 3) Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Small Group Meeting Updates, 4) Updated Frequency Table, 5) Monitoring and Reporting, 6) Report Out to HCP Steering Committee (SC), and 7) Approach Going Forward, Next Steps, and Summary.

Cindy Kolomechuk, ODF, thanked ST members for attending and shared that ODF would use the meeting to provide substantive updates on the work ODF has been doing with the Services and internally, with field staff. The HCP Project Team has been working with field staff to operationalize the HCP and has received feedback on modifications that may be needed for implementation. Cindy stressed the importance of having an HCP that is technically sound, publicly acceptable, and operationally feasible.

### **AGENCY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT UPDATES**

Members of the ST provided the following updates relevant to the Western Oregon State Forests HCP:

- **NOAA Fisheries:** NOAA Fisheries is reviewing the Draft HCP following general counsel review.
- **USFWS:** No updates.
- **DEQ:** No updates.
- **DSL:** DSL is in the process of acquiring 160 acres of BLM land in Linn County. The land could be acquired by January 2024. DSL is interested in adding several parcels to the

HCP. The land has been managed in the past and it's unlikely it would be included in Habitat Conservation Areas (HCAs)

- **ODFW:** No updates.
- **ODF:** 1) ODF recently reorganized the division. Nick Palazzotto is now managing the fish and wildlife biologists in the biological support unit. 2) ODF recently shared the Draft Forest Management Plan (FMP) with the public. The HCP helps ODF comply with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the FMP helps ODF meet Greatest Permanent Value (GPV) mandates.

Sylvia Ciborowski shared that ODF is planning to host a meeting on August 22 with the public to review the Draft FMP.

## **HCP SMALL GROUP MEETING UPDATES**

### Downed Wood

Nick Palazzotto, ODF, shared updates to Conservation Action 8:

- Added additional language to clarify the intent and contributions of ODF's legacy retention strategy.
- Added that the abundance of large snags is anticipated to improve over time and stands outside of HCAs will provide some habitat functions.
- Added language clarifying what ODF is managing the matrix for and how dispersal habitat fits in. Reiterated that ODF is not managing down to the level of dispersal habitat. Dispersal habitat will to some extent be an outcome of the age class structure outside the matrix.
- Expanded on how different elements in the stand-level management standards section contribute to the overall process.
- Connected the Legacy Retention Strategy to adaptive management.

Nick also reviewed edits to Table 4-12 related to snags and downed wood. The table initially directed ODF to retain all snags. However, in the case of a fire, ODF wants to be able to salvage stands quickly. ODF updated the table to allow ODF to harvest trees that have been killed in a fire while seeking to retain legacy class that was in the harvest unit prior. For downed wood, ODF made it clear that the focus is on large legacy downed wood. ODF also updated language in the table from "retain at least an average of 600-900 cubic feet" to "retain at least 600 cubic feet on average per acre in each harvest unit". ODF also added language that, for sales that are unable to meet the cubic feet and/or large diameter requirement, the agency could leave additional hardwoods, leave trees, and downed wood on the landscape.

Nick stressed that these changes are not a reduction in the commitment, but an improvement in how the commitment is communicated.

### **Discussion**

**Question:** How will ODF measure downed wood?

- **Nick Palazzotto:** There are several options for measuring downed wood. The best option would include using drones to classify the number and size of logs. Another option would include laying out plots and doing line transects. In the past, ODF did enough collections to understand what the right amount looked like. There will need to be some measurement associated with downed wood for the annual report, and the desire is to have flexibility in the method for measurement.

### Fish Passage

Erik Moberly, ODF, shared that ODF's commitments in the HCP for artificial fish passage barriers were informed by ODFW's 2019 dataset. The dataset includes over 40,000 data points. To verify the accuracy of the data, ODF assessed fish passage barriers and presented findings to the Services, including the status of the barrier and the number of sites. ODF identified 75 potential barriers, with some still needing review. After confirming the status of the barriers through desktop and field review, ODF will work to prioritize barriers for removal.

### **Discussion**

**Question:** Is ODF working with ODFW to update the dataset?

- **Erik Moberly:** ODF is working with staff from ODFW. ODF's stream layer doesn't always line up with the stream layer that ODFW used for the blockages, so some alignment was needed to identify which fish passages should be considered for the HCP. Once there is a universal stream layer, ODF can identify discrepancies.

**Question:** When will desktop and field review be complete?

- **Derek Bangs:** Review is complete for all but two districts that are responding to fires. Updated data should be available within the next two weeks. Data will not be available for streams that have not been surveyed. ODF will determine if additional survey work is needed on these streams. This issue can be described in the HCP narrative.

**Question:** How will fish passage blockages be addressed through the HCP?

- **Derek Bangs:** Some of the blockages are small, with fish use ending 20 feet from the other side of the road. ODF will work with NOAA Fisheries to determine what the commitment needs to be in cases like this and how to prioritize improvements.

**Question:** What does "addressed" mean in the context of fish passage?

- **Derek Bangs:** In cases where blockages are identified as "addressed", the fish passage ended close to the road, or it was a natural barrier. For each crossing, ODF reviewed if there was a bridge or a fish passage culvert installed. Field staff were asked to review these areas to see if they meet Tech Note 5 Fish Passage Requirements.

### HCP Manual Edits

Vanessa Palazzotto, ODF, shared that ODF developed a field manual to help with HCP implementation. Staff provided edits in April and ODF has been meeting with the Services to review the edits. Vanessa noted that many of the edits were clarifying changes and shared those that were substantive. ODF will continue to receive comments from the field on the HCP manual and will work with the Services and ST to share updates as needed.

## **FREQUENCY TABLE**

Derek Bangs, ODF, shared that the frequency table was created to remove the use of phrases like “where possible” and “when feasible” by outlining situations in which ODF would be unlikely to meet the commitment. The table was developed prior to many of the commitments in Chapter 4 of the HCP and ODF has been working on aligning content in the table with the commitments. Derek walked through the frequency table with the group and highlighted changes made. The frequency table is available in the appendices of the HCP. ODF will share the frequency table with the ST for awareness following the meeting. Sylvia asked ST members to share any questions that come up during review of the table.

## **MONITORING AND REPORTING**

Cindy Kolomechuk shared that ODF has been working with the Services to determine the process for monitoring and adaptive management, including what the triggers could be and how ODF would work with the Services to make modifications. ODF is meeting with the Services on July 31 to continue conversations on monitoring and adaptive management. Cindy noted the importance of providing the Services with assurances for the commitments and providing ODF with certainty over the course of the permit term.

### Monitoring Requirements

Derek Bangs shared that ODF has been working on identifying data needs for monitoring requirements and areas of consolidation. Derek used the example of the hydro-connectivity layer to illustrate how ODF could meet four commitments with one dataset. The layer can be used to identify areas on the road system that need improvements, areas that have been mitigated, and areas that are connected to streams. ODF recently met with USFWS and NOAA Fisheries to share the consolidated list and is currently working on downed wood reporting requirements.

Derek shared that the next step for monitoring requirements is to meet with the Services to ensure there is alignment. Any updates will be shared with the ST at future meetings.

### Wet Weather Operator Closures

Derek shared how the reporting requirement for wet weather operator closures was revised with the Services. ODF will provide an annual list of operations that were temporarily suspended by ODF due to sediment delivery with a description of the event, the stream type, and what mitigation actions were taken. This better reflects the intent to report on instances where there is sediment delivery.

## **Discussion**

**Question:** Is ODF concerned about the potential costs of monitoring?

- **Nick Palazzotto:** The HCP will reduce monitoring costs for the agency. ODF needs to determine the source of funding for certain activities and is working on identifying efficiencies for monitoring efforts. For instance, not all monitoring activities are

associated solely with the HCP. Hydro-connectivity will need to be tracked for the HCP and the Forest Practices Act.

## **REPORT OUT TO HCP STEERING COMMITTEE**

Sylvia Ciborowski asked the ST if they had anything to report to the SC. The ST did not provide any updates for the SC.

## **APPROACH GOING FORWARD, NEXT STEPS, AND SUMMARY**

Sylvia Ciborowski shared appreciation for ST engagement in the HCP process and reviewed upcoming meetings before closing the meeting.

- Tuesday, August 22 12-2pm – *HCP Steering Committee Meeting*
- Wednesday, August 23 1-3pm – *HCP Scoping Team Meeting*

Cindy Kolomechuk shared that ODF will continue to work with the Services on monitoring and reporting topics.