

April 6, 2015

TO: Members - Board of Forestry Sub-Committee
Alternate Forest Management Plans

FROM: Carolyn Eady

SUBJECT: Alternate FMP: A Clatsop County Resident's Perspective

Forestry is very important to Clatsop County residents: more than 80% of our total land base of 530,000 acres is forested. The three major commercial timber companies own about 234,000 acres or 44% of the land in the County. ODF's Astoria District manages about another 25% of the total land or 135,000 acres. The missing element in Clatsop County is the forestry acres managed by the federal government: there is no federal forestland in Clatsop County.

The Forest industry here is not only a significant economic driver, but these forests also provide a wealth of recreational opportunities to residents and visitors: the County's last Recreational Master Plan estimated that 420,000 acres are available for recreational opportunities. My point in citing these facts is to highlight that *the Forests in Clatsop County are as much a part of the fabric of living here as the Ocean.*

You may think because you have not heard much from Clatsop County residents the past 10 years or so is because they don't care. Not true! This past Winter there was a low key event one evening sponsored by the North Coast Forestry Alliance at the Fort George Brewery and over 100 people showed up, including a lot of young people. It was billed as an update on Clatsop State Forestry issues. I think the people are not passive, but generally accept recent State forest management as a balanced approach.

Another factor is the amount of time and energy local residents have invested the past 10 years in a successful fight (so far) to keep LNG import (now export) facilities off of the Lower Columbia River. A big part of this was to block Oregon LNG's approval from the County to build a 3 foot high pressure natural gas pipeline from the southeast corner to the northwest corner of the County. It was intended to feed the proposed \$6 billion facility proposed for the Skipanon Peninsula in Warrenton, but create a permanent 75 foot scar through our forestland and numerous bodies of water. The high risk it would create in our notoriously unstable, earthquake vulnerable land is obvious. It also poses a serious threat to the fishing and the shipping industries. We are cautiously optimistic that within a year or so, we can put this battle to rest.

Finally, I would like to conclude my testimony with a few more personal observations based on my involvement in forestry issues since the late 90's; from attending numerous BOF meetings and observing how hard they work to arrive at a balanced solution; to serving on the County's Implementation Plan Focus Group; and a couple terms on the State Forest Advisory Committee.

1. I know the timber industry and some Counties did not regard the 2001 FMP as "balanced." My perspective is it was doing okay until it ran into the worse recession and housing bust in 70 years. I don't regard that as a fault of the plan. If you look at the data, it should be recognized that well not perfect, the FMP was quite successful in many areas including creating complex structure in Clatsop County, as well as protecting other environmentally sensitive areas.

2. Everyone knows that ODF needs more revenue to restore critical staff positions and also to build up its reserve fund. My concern is that there will be *permanent changes in forest management that will have too high of a cost environmentally*. If the State does not or will not step up with sufficient funds to restore the reserve fund, I would much rather see a time-limited temporary (e.g. 3-5 year) “tax” based on actual board feet harvested with a variable payback period based on the economic condition of each county. (It would be similar to what was done to re-pay ODF for their restoration activities after the big forest fires of the 30' and 40's.)
3. I urge you to allow sufficient time in the review and approval schedule to allow the three relatively new members of the Clatsop County BOC to play catch-up on the alternate Plan. Our Chair, Scott Lee, is well informed and can represent Clatsop Counties interest at FTLAC, but because this is a BIG issue, it may be controversial; he needs a majority of the BOC to support him. He, as well as the other Board members, need to be able to explain the Plan and their position to an interested public. I think this would help to quell much of the controversy.
4. I personally find the use of the word “encumbrances” to describe older trees offensive. Please do not let the tail wag the dog. We have so few Northern Spotted Owls left in Clatsop County, I think ODF can come up with a workable solution.
5. Finally, please remember *the only complex structure Clatsop County will have will be what the Plan finally adopted allows*. When you consider the BOF only oversee 25% of the County's land base, then take the 30% designated as “Conservation”, (well actually not 30% since this includes all the “non-operable” acres like quarries, slide areas, road and stream buffers, etc.) , the conservation zone might end up being about 5% of the overall County total. To me personally, it would only add insult to injury if you ever adopted a policy of first removing all the “encumbrances” of trees over 70 years. This would literally be cutting away the gains of all the staff and volunteers who worked so hard the past 20 years to improve the State Forests.

I hope some of these ideas and observations are helpful. Thank you for the opportunity to present them to you.

Carolyn Eady

CC: Doug Decker, State Forester
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