

# Deschutes County Forestland Classification

November 5, 2014 – 6 PM  
Minutes

## Committee Members Present:

Ed Keith, Deschutes County Forester  
Kristin Dodd, ODF, Assistant District Forester  
Jeremy Ast, Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire  
Matt Cyrus, Grazing Representative  
Bill Swarts, Timber Representative  
Nicole Strong, Deschutes County OSU-Extension Agent

## Committee Members Absent:

None

## Guests:

George Ponte, ODF, District Forester  
Gordon Foster, ODF, Unit Forester  
Tana West, Deschutes County Assessor's Office  
Rick Gibson, Interface Landowner  
Joe Stutler, Local Landowner  
Bill Kuhn, Local Landowner

## Opening Welcome & Introductions

### Open Forestland Classification Committee Meeting at 7:46 pm:

**Committee Members:** Three of the committee members are appointed by Deschutes County Commissioners, one committee member is appointed by the State Fire Marshal, another by the Director of OSU-Extension and the last committee member is appointed by the State Forester.

**Bill Swarts** is a Retired Forester and he will be representing Cascade Timber. He holds the position of the Timber Representative on this committee.

**Matt Cyrus** is a private landowner is located near Sisters in the Cloverdale Fire District. He will be representing the grazing interest on this committee.

**Ed Keith** is the Deschutes County Forester. He holds multiple seats on committees for interested parties. He is the Chair of Project Wildfire and Vice-Chair of the Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project. He will be representing the Deschutes County Member at large on this committee.

**Nicole Strong** is the committee member appointed by the Director of the OSU Extension. She is the Extension Forester for Deschutes, Crook, Jefferson Counties and the Confederate Tribes of Warm Springs

**Jeremy Ast** is the committee member who was appointed by the State Fire Marshal's office. He is the shift commander at Sisters Camp Sherman Fire.

**Kristin Dodd** is the Assistant District Forester from ODF. The State Forester has appointed her to this committee.

**Review specifics of Statutes & Rules:** **George Ponte** gave a presentation to the committee members on the specific rules & statutes that will govern this classification process.

This group will focus their efforts on lands that are within the Oregon Department of Forestry fire protection district boundary. They will be charged to determine if the current lands are classified correctly, if there are any lands that need to be classified or if there are any lands that should no longer be assessed. One large discussion point that the committee will need to wade through is the classification of suburban areas. Where does the forestland stop and begin?

Once the committee makes its preliminary recommendations, there will be multiple public meetings to capture any community input. There will also be a public hearing held for community members who may have input in support or concerns about how their land is classified. The final recommendation will go to the State Forester. Any appeals to the classification will go to circuit court without a jury.

**Matt Cyrus** asked who defends the findings of the committee if there are any appeals?

**George Ponte** explained that in previous matters the Oregon Department of Justice filled that role. The only matter that would be examined if there were an appeal will be if the committee followed the process correctly. The circuit court cannot make the determination on if the land was classified correctly.

#### **Election of Officers:**

**George Ponte** mentioned to the group that the only mandated officers for the classification process is a Chair and Secretary. The committee can elect any other officers they deem necessary for the classification process. The group concluded that a Vice-Chair is an officer they would like to elect, in case the Chair cannot make any one meeting.

**Bill Swarts** nominated **Ed Keith** due to Ed's experience being chair on multiple committees. **Nicole Strong** added she would be willing to hold a vice-chair position. The group elected **Ed Keith** chair, **Nicole Strong** vice-chair, and **Kristin Dodd** secretary of the Forest Land Classification Committee. **Kristin Dodd** shared that Alison Green will be recording the minutes for the committee and that Boone Zimmerlee, with ODF, will provide GIS support during this classification process.

#### **Discussion of By-Laws:**

The committee reviewed the by-laws to determine if any changes need to be added for the Deschutes County process. **Kristin Dodd** mentioned that the one clause that should be addressed is the definition of a quorum. The group agreed that 4 members of the committee present for any one meeting would define a quorum. The by-laws dictate that all meetings for the committee will be advertised to the general public ahead of time. **Ed Keith** shared that most public notices for Deschutes County are posted electronically. The committee agreed that the notice would be posted in accordance with Deschutes County and ODF's common practices for public notification. **Matt Cyrus** suggested that posting hard copies at the Deschutes County's Commissioners Office, Post Office, Deschutes County Public Works, and the local libraries would help notify the public about the meetings.

With the above changes **Matt Cyrus** moved to adopt the by-laws. **Nicole Strong** seconded the motion. The committee passed the by-laws.

### **Calendar Planning – Meeting Schedule:**

**George Ponte** suggested that the group pick dates and times that could be easily attended by the general public who may have any interest. **Kristin Dodd** mentioned that there is a strong possibility for field trips to confirm what the committee is discussion during classification. As the group starts moving through maps to classify each area shorter, more frequent meetings may be more productive. **George Ponte** added that he is anticipating this proves to take two years but he has no set expectations for the committee. **Kristin Dodd** suggested as fire season begins that the committee should put this process on hold to mitigate any scheduling conflicts that may arise. **Ed Keith** noted that the more GIS work that will be required might dictate a longer time period between meetings to allow for data turnaround. Boone will need some prep time depending on the topic of any given meeting. **Kristin Dodd** added that the decisions made at the next couple of meetings would give the groundwork for GIS support. The group agreed that more frequent meetings might help expedite the process. The committee agreed on the next meeting on November 21<sup>st</sup> starting at noon. The next two meetings will be on December 17<sup>th</sup> at 12-2pm and January 7<sup>th</sup> at 12-2pm at the Deschutes County Road Department Building on 27<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Kristin Dodd** noted that this committee should be able to decide on the sideboards for the vital GIS work that will make up the majority of the classification process. **Kristin Dodd** provided the committee with binders that they could keep notes and materials that can inform their decisions in the classification process. Talk through the issue papers to establish sideboards for the group before the mapping work begins. Decisions made by the committee will be well documented and will be made available electronically. **Kristin Dodd** will remind the committee of upcoming meetings and will ensure they will at least have a quorum. **Kristin Dodd** has also developed handouts that the committee can use for outreach and she will do her best to field the majority of the questions that community members may have.

### **General Discussion:**

There was no further business brought to discussion by any of the committee members or community member present.

**Meeting Adjourned at 8:20 pm.**

**Next meeting:** November 21<sup>st</sup>, 12-2pm at the Deschutes County Public Works Department.