

Combined NW & SW Oregon Regional Forest Practices Committee Meeting Minutes – December 5, 2014

Pursuant to public notice made by news release with statewide distribution, a combined committee meeting of the Northwest and Southwest Oregon Regional Forest Practices Committees [an advisory body to the Oregon Board of Forestry with authority established in Oregon Revised Statute 527.650] was held on December 5, 2014 at the Weyerhaeuser Office, 785 North 42nd Street, Springfield, OR 97477

[These minutes provide a summarized version of discussions formatted for ease of understanding and should not be considered a transcript of the proceedings or quotation of individual comments.]

Committee members present:

Mike Barnes, NW Chair
Mike Schlaefli, SW Chair
Candace Bonner - NW
Tally Patton – NW
Mike Maguire – SW
Dave Erickson – SW
Scott Gray – NW
Dale Cuyler – SW
Wendell Locke - NW

Dana Kjos – SW
Sanford Hillman - SW
Jon Stewart – NW
Randy Silbernagel – NW
Jim Hunt – NW
Daniel Fugate – SW

Not in attendance:

Mike Meredith – SW
Eric Farm - SW
Steve McNulty – NW

ODF Staff present:

Peter Daugherty
Paul Bell
Lena Tucker
Kyle Abraham
Keith Baldwin
Susan Dominique
Terry Frueh
Marganne Allen
Jeremy Groom
Steve Kendall
Dan Menk
Tim Meehan
Jim Ewing
Jay Morey
Nicholai Hall
John Seward
Scott Swearingen
Tim Meehan
Kyle Williams
Greg Wagenblast

Guests:

Gary Springer, BOF
Eric Geyer, Roseburg Forest Products
Jim James, OSWA
Jeff Light, Plum Creek
Heath Curtiss, OFIC
Rick Barnes, CFF, Barnes & Assoc.
Randy Hereford, Starker Forests
Maryanne Reiter, Weyerhaeuser
Ted Lorensen
Eric Kranzush, Guistina LFT
Mike Rondell, Plum Creek
Bob Ragen, Douglas Timber Operators

Call to Order

Tally Patton shared facility safety information.
NW Chair, Mike Barnes called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

Item 1 – Welcome and Review of the Agenda

- Roundtable introductions were made.
- Review/Changes to Agenda - None

Item 2 - Chair's Announcements

Item 3 - Housekeeping

- **Public Comment** – There was no public comment offered. Public members attending were asked to allow the committee members to have their opportunity to ask questions and discuss issues first before providing any comment.
- **Approval of the Minutes**
November minutes have been provided for review and approval at the January meeting.

Item 4 – Overview of Topics to be covered – Peter Daugherty

We have 3 main topics the BOF has asked us to weigh in on: Delineation of extent of SSBT, Stream reach and Geo-regions and beginning initial development of prescription options. In each of those topics there are policy considerations (which will be Board decisions) and technical considerations. Looking at technical aspects of the rules is where the BOF really looks to this committee for its strength.

Item 5 – Review of Information Requests from RFPC Members

[Handouts: Members received some documents and links to website materials regarding questions on buffer measurements, description of the RipStream plots design, Modified Stand Level Inventory, a description and image of how those plots were laid out. We also provided an updated spreadsheet providing a corrected summary of site by site information. Information about observed temperature changes vs. predicted temperature changes site by site.]

Allen provided more information on blowdown. Blowdown was added in as something to collect information on *after* the pre-harvest information was collected by the contractor on the vegetation. What our field crews did was go through any trees that were recent blow down, include the diameter of the blowdown trees that still had green or brown needles and leaves so we tried not to pick up any older blow-down data. Then the data was subtracted back out, so we were not over-estimating the standing basal area on site for the number of trees. If newer blowdowns were picked up in the original survey it was documented as 'downed wood' in the pre-harvest.

- It was proposed that we re-evaluate your questions regarding the study plots after the presentation by Maryanne Reiter on a site-by-site analysis so as not to duplicate material.
- Question was asked about the temperature change data matching up in the graphs.

Frueh: On the graphed data, predicted versus observed temperature change the data was the same but shown in different ways. Everything effects temperature change, so there will be variation, the harvest effect is one part of the mix. The graphs reflect how well the Predicted temperature from the model scored against the Observed temperatures. The model seemed to be functioning against the Observed data. We are finding that the primary driver is shade and shade is based on basal area. Tools we are looking at are increasing the width of the buffer, and increasing the density of the trees in the buffer. Gradient and Aspect seem to have less of an effect.

- There was concern that we might be constraining the solution by what's in the model.

Allen: We determined we needed to do a Systematic Review of all available science to identify what alternatives are informed by science. Because of the science findings from the review we settled on the 3 alternatives. No-cut, Variable Retention, Plan for Alternate Practice. It doesn't mean other aspects wouldn't be considered. People shouldn't be constrained in their thinking because of the model. Science already demonstrated the effectiveness of shade. The BOF should have a sense of confidence, either qualitatively, or quantitatively for any form of alternative that will likely meet our goal. The model is just a tool to provide assurance but it is not meant to constrain your thinking.

Item 6 – Methods for Delineating SSBT Streams

Frueh reminded members that the BOF said to work with RFPC and other stakeholders to determine to which stream segments the rule should apply, whether to SSBT reaches or the entire network of Small and Medium Fish streams. One bookend is the rule analysis objective which focuses on S and M Fish streams and the other is PCW itself which says, 'applies to all sources taken together at the POMI where SSBT are present.' and also says you need to include contributing upstream waters. The ODF fish streams may feed into the main stream at the upper extent of SSBT.

- What is the definition of Point of Maximum Impact (POMI)?

Daugherty: On a clearcut the POMI of the temperature effect will be at the bottom end of the clearcut reach. If above where SSBT are present, the POMI is where it hits the SSBT presence.

- Where would the POMI be on a thinning unit?

Daugherty: Most of the buffer study used a clearcut activity. You could infer there would be a temperature effect on a thinning unit as well. When you start adding tributaries there is a concept of cumulative effects which starts coming in. With tributaries we would have to use a mixing equation which adds a whole other level of complexity. We have mixing equations but we rapidly add in so many assumptions that the certainty is lost.

- It might help to point out, that it is possible to have a .7 degree C increase at the bottom of the harvest unit but by the time it gets to SSBT it is .2 degrees C so there is no effect on SSBT.

ODFW distribution maps, data sources and update process:

Allen introduced John Bowers, GIS Coordinator for ODF&W and official keeper of the SSBT layer and Rod Krahmer, Forest Practices Liaison for ODF&W. John was invited to speak with the members regarding the ODF&W map layers at a high level context.

Bowers addressed the origin and process for documenting for fish habitat distribution data. Their data set represents both current and historical for SSBT and other species. The map information is not too different from the ODF Fish present data, but species specific layers have been added. The basis for that information ranges from protocol based surveys to peer reviewed opinions from fisheries biologists.

He addressed what the data represents, how it is maintained and limitations of the data. The data is comprised from numerous sources: resource agencies, watershed councils, industry and private sources, USFS and BLM. ODF&W makes periodic efforts to further develop this data and supplement it with newer information. The standard has in it the business rules we use when updating the data. For SSBT, the data sets are comprehensive but not perfect. 95+% of the reality on the ground.

Limitations? It's not perfect, it is data, and we have made a significant effort to map habitats as accurately as possible. There are plenty of streams that haven't been surveyed for these species. We also maintain a knowledge of artificial and natural fish barriers and we refine data sets with known barriers. Actual extent may vary by a few hundred feet.

We categorize current and historic layers separately. It is assumed where there is current distribution it would be historic. But there are some cases where the origin is not necessarily historic as with hatchery origin fish. There can be distribution where it was not historically found.

If designated as habitat it doesn't mean it is occupied on an annual basis. It does mean it is believed to be occupied in the last 5 generations. With intermittent use there is no guarantee of use for that fish, that stream, that year.

Daugherty: When we put the maps up, as illustrative, we started with the ODF&W maps and combined SSBT into a single layer. The PCW doesn't distinguish between species just for SSBT. The other issue we have, is our rules are on Small and Medium size streams. The ODF&W does not distinguish between stream sizes. But we have transferred size as an attribute to ODF&W. We have characterized their layers with our stream size. We probably have the data we need but we haven't finished the QA/QC yet to make this data available to whoever wants it. It will be for small and medium streams only.

We have information on large, medium and small SSBT and large, medium and small Fish Streams and then will buffer those independently in 20' intervals out to 100 feet. We are compiling that in GIS and Table form and also by acres, miles, ownership, federal, other, non-industrial and industrial private. We are using that to characterize to the BOF the kind of impact that could happen in a variety of ways. The economic cost to a prescription is related to the acres encumbered by that prescription. The economic impact analysis will be done when the final prescription is selected by the BOF. We picked a 20' interval because we do have a rule with a 20' no harvest area around fish streams and it seemed to be a starting point. Going out to 100' in 20' intervals was associated with the need, trying to characterize the amount of acres encumbered for the range of stream extent. The BOF in their direction to us set those benchmarks.

Action Item: Send out the ODFW and ODF's SSBT GIS map to members after we complete QA/QC.

LUNCH

Item 7 – Geo-region Discussion

[Handout: Summary Technical Report 12]

Brian Schlaefli led the geo-region discussion. In previous discussions because of the tight timeline we offered that all geo-regions could be lumped together aside from the Siskiyou. Without knowing what the prescriptions might be, it appeared that there is enough difference in terms of vegetation and geology.

Comments/Questions?

- As there are some differences in the RMAs regionally, as we go to prescriptions options may inform us that combining geo-regions that would make sense.

What we can say is harvests will reduce shade and will affect temperature. It is very common throughout all the studies that we've done over time is that people don't commonly go to the bare minimum of the FPA so it's challenging to make inferences about outcomes.

- So we are looking at considering all four regions differently, or 3 together and one separately or all four together.
- Systematic review still provides a consistent message of near streamside harvest reducing temperature. The general message is the same. So here's a situation backed with science data but nothing to differentiate. It may come down to a policy decision.
- As we finalize recommendations this question will be more easily addressed. But it's not the dominating issue.
- All of our models and data that we have to use to evaluate the prescriptions is concentrated in the mid-valley and coastal areas, with that in mind, it makes sense to focus on where the data is. We need to use the tools we have fitting a region and go from there.

Item 8 - Site Specific Analysis – Maryanne Reiter

[Slideshow of sites.]

- Member's point of concern was seeing the sites that did not meet the standards.

Reiter: This map shows the distribution of the private sites and whether or not they met the PCW.

Looking at exceedances, some were one-sided, some two-sided buffers. These sites were marked for the ODF Fish layer. Vegetation plots were picked centered on the RMA. These were from Google Earth looking at RipStream sites Pre- and Post-Harvest.

Action Item: Send out the slides detail through a link to website.

- When there are two-sided harvests it seems to be consistently exceeding the PCW. One-sided buffers seem to facilitate meeting the PCW.

Groom: With the current model we do have the ability to include sidedness as a variable.

Reiter: If you look at just basal area, before harvest the basal area would be out to 100' and would have more conifer in it, so the hardwood basal area density would look less. After harvest, now you are narrowing down the buffer so the amount of hardwood is a larger component of that narrower strip.

So what might have been easier to look at would have been the total basal area. So you can see what went up and what went down. And look at how wide the plot was.

(Discussion of study plots.)

- It seems to be that two-sided harvests were consistently exceeding the PCW.

Groom: When we ran the PCW analysis, we crafted it with DEQ language. DEQ language doesn't include a lot of things that would craft a sharper answer. So with the other model where it dives in asking the why, yes it does include sidedness of the harvest.

Action Item: ODF will import the plot locations into Reiter's photos and send out a link.

- Suggestion to add sidedness to a list of options as a higher variable factor than aspect.

Item 9 – Initial Discussion on development of options

Allen: In March, the proposal on the table is that we bring forth methods about how each of the elements would be presented as far as how stream reaches, geo-regions, economic methods would be presented. It was proposed that the BOF was to have a decision on the geo-regions. April would be the rest of decision-making for the rest of the package.

Barnes: We have had a pretty extensive discussion on what the PCW addresses as far as species. We've seen John's data and maybe connected it with ODF's. I think we could probably discuss what we are going to use as far as the breadth of where we put these new rules. All Fish or SSBT?

Motion from Scott Gray, that we only consider the Salmon, Steelhead, and Bull Trout Reaches for the Cold Water Standard. Tally Patton seconded the Motion.

- The technical data to base that recommendation on would be that it matches up with PCW standard.
- Question on the requirement to look at the reaches immediately above that on F streams that may have an impact on the SSBT.

Scott Gray modified his **Motion** to include reaches designated on the ODFW database for SSBT current habitat.

- This is a vote on a minimum. All we are doing is taking a first step. And upper reaches might be included onto that.

Barnes: Noted that there was a discussion on current and historical, but there was no decision made.

Schlaefli: We are trying to narrow the context from a discussion to a Committee Action.

- If a new reach is opened up into an historical reach for some reason, then it would become current habitat and management would change at that time to match the opening of the habitat.
If you limit it to current and if those barriers are breached then you would change to managing back into historical reaches, but I don't think you have to manage those reaches right now.

Gray re-stated Motion that we limit the considerations to the SSBT current habitat of the ODFW database. Jon Stewart Seconded the Motion.

Barnes: Vote by NW Committee, all agreed. Vote by SW Committee, all agreed. Motion Passed unanimously.

Discussion on Additional Reaches and Point of Maximum Impact (POMI)

- POMI is generally going to be at the end of the harvest unit, but for the PCW it is defined as...
"Point of maximum impact means the location(s) on a water body, or on a downstream water body, at which the greatest increase in temperature caused by human sources/activities/alterations occurs." - DEQ Protecting Cold Water Criterion IMD

Groom: The sites that warmed the most cooled the quickest, but that is over time not over distance.

In the downstream analysis, we looked at the volume of water and gradient. Example, if it is a real narrow, skinny stream with a meander and a low gradient, it will take a parcel of water plenty of time to react with the gradient reach the temperature could change a lot. But a larger stream on a steeper gradient and at 300m is is not going to change that much.

- It is an exponential decay, Newton's Law of Cooling, we can't speak to downstream over 300m. It was found on average 50% of the change in temperature will be diminished 300m downstream.
- How far upstream will depend on some of the decisions you still have to make. To the extent you are weighing in on the Maximum Extent Practicable I would propose to you that inclusion of more geo-regions or larger prescriptions will make your appetite for reaching upstream decrease. So you first may want to know what you could be applying upstream.
- I am going to want to go to the SSBT map to determine where to end. We may be creating too fine a point which may be inefficient to practice on the ground.

- The traditional family forestland owner may not want to mess with complicated riparian areas, but they also would not like that choice taken away. They want the right to do it if they want to.

Barnes – I've written down some keywords that we might keep in mind as we develop recommendations.

- Supportable by science
- Understandable
- Implementable
- Practicable/Financially viable

We already know what the sideboards are of this. We can apply these considerations to reaches that are SSBT at this point. Where do we go from there?

- If you leave one side of the stream alone, using the existing guidelines, it doesn't seem to change the temperature that much. That might be one opportunity to look at for these riparian corridors. But then there would be a time factor for harvesting the other side.
- Linear distance, hasn't been looked at for small landowners.
- I really like the simplicity of a no-cut buffer width. That is something that we should talk about, No-cut Buffer versus management within the RMA as a topic for discussion.
- I would agree to the extent that it is a bookend, we know that the State Forests practices do not exceed the PCW. So, how much can we cut back from that to a narrower corridor? 100 foot is a starting point.
- We could talk about shade, which is the critical issue. Shade could be managed for what percentage we should keep. That could be an option as well. There are tools to do those measurements.
- What percentage of shade do we have to have?

Groom: Offhand a 5% change in shade. 80 down to 75, or 95 down to 80.

- My concern is that we know that more shade will reduce temperature increases. But we also know that opening the canopy increases fish production. I lean towards some kind of guidance document with things you can do to increase shade.

Allen: There is no question that the science that indicates positive fish response to openings. The bigger question is clearly there is a threshold. We went too far in the past. If you had a high level of openings everywhere in a system at the same time doesn't mean the statement will hold true.

- So that kind of supports the idea of voluntary measures. Looking at the perspective of the rules protecting the resources at least we have some science saying the current rules are effective for the fish. The voluntary measures sound like an opportunity to address temperature change and at the same time you are taking into account your other resources. Like woody debris and other things. Especially having voluntary measures on SSBT streams.
- Blowdowns are a predictable feature and sometimes equals management down to 20' levels.
- If there is a problem you can identify that presents itself, that's the place to put your time and effort. Trying to combine all that together, there are places where that doesn't happen. When we do this we want to be cognizant, on what type of problem we are having and where it is happening.

Allen: The direction from the Board of Forestry is to address the PCW standard.

- Some hold the position that the BOF charge is to meet the PCW *to the MEP*. That includes a number of factors for the BOF consider, the first is impacts to beneficial uses, feasibility and other factors.
- I am concerned that anything we pass to the MEP should not effect other aquatic resources.

Scott Gray: I propose a **Motion** that any practices discussed be voluntary in nature.

Barnes: We can bring the BOF multiple recommendations, voluntary vs regulatory may both be considered. I think the charge from the BOF also gave us an opportunity to address them in more than one way.

Voluntary Measures discussion

- On small streams you could have a requirement to have a given number of conifers left larger than 6" dbh over a certain stretch. Whether it is a 200' reach, appropriate number per. Smalls are not protected at all, where mediums and larges are. This would disperse them more uniformly across the region on SSBT streams.
- Focusing on voluntary actions helps the flow of ideas.
- Right now smalls do not have a specific number of conifers required. Shorten the reaches and force a better distribution of trees. Right now it's 30 for medium and 40 for large. One of the things I mentioned was a 6" dbh which are smaller trees but less prone to blowdown.
- Work with trees that have some resistance to blowdown. Hardwoods?

Schlaefli: So the focus of this discussion is about having intelligent buffers rather just getting bigger.

Action Item: Pull out the brainstorming ideas from the September meeting, and mock up a one pager to email out to members.

Good of the Order

Action Item: Ensure all meeting minutes are posted to the external website.

Allen: As an offering, we have set up field day on December 8th with Stewardship Foresters doing exercises speaking to these riparian rules and using potential tools in hand. Running through options conceptually through different types of prescriptions. We could engage the RFPC to go out and run through different ideas with hands on tools. Potentially **January 15th**.

Action Item: There was interest in setting up a hands-on field opportunity on January 15th?

The next meeting is scheduled for January 22nd at Weyerhaeuser/Springfield.

Adjourned at 3:30pm.

Action Items:

- Send out the ODFW and ODF's SSBT GIS map to members after we complete QA/QC.
- Send out slides detail through a link to website.
- ODF to import the plot locations into plot photos and send out link.
- Pull out brainstorming ideas from the September meeting and mock up one pager. Email to members.
- Hands-on field opportunity to conceptualize solutions on January 15th.

Decision Point:

Motion: That the RFPC limit Riparian Rule recommendations to SSBT Current habitat shown on the ODF&W database.
Motion passed unanimously by both committees.