Ring in the new year… Raise your voice for Oregon's Forests

Kick off the new year by completing ODF's Forest Management Plan Survey -- and use this guide to help!

Link to survey: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HNQ8SG6
Deadline to complete survey: January 7, 2022

Background:
The Oregon Department of Forestry ODF) is seeking feedback on draft forest management strategies for its Western Forest Management Plan. Oregon's Western Forest Management Plan (FMP) covers approximately 613,000 acres, including the Tillamook, Clatsop, and Santiam State Forests. The FMP strategies are intended to provide specific management direction for these lands and represent an opportunity to build a better model for how the state approaches public forest management. **This is a critical opportunity to help shape ODF's future management direction and build a path forward that supports biodiversity, climate resilience, watershed health, and community drinking water supplies through the management of state forest lands.**

Survey Instructions:

- The survey will 1) ask you to select the goals most important to you, 2) ask you to rank your relative sense of satisfaction with the current strategy language tied to a given goal, and 3) offer you a chance to input your specific comments.
- Note: this is a lengthy survey, but you do not have to provide feedback for each goal! Below, we've provided some recommendations for feedback to enter in the comment boxes for goals and strategies related to forest resilience, air and water quality, and public health and wellbeing. Pick and choose which goals and strategies you most want to weigh in on and adapt the text below as you see fit. If you don't have a strong opinion on a certain goal, feel free to select the "don't know" option.
- Remember to provide your feedback by **Friday, January 7, 2022!**

Goals for Climate Change and Resilience

Forest Resilience Goal 1:

- Manage to promote mature and old growth forest characteristics as these have higher genetic, species, and ecosystem diversities, resilience to climate extremes, and increased water availability (Law et al. 2021).
- Minimize pesticide use, as this supports monoculture timber planting that can weaken an ecosystem's ability to recover from disturbances.
- Ensure post-fire logging is focused on hazard trees, keeps as many trees on the landscape as possible, and retains green trees. Post-fire logging hinders natural recovery and increases the risk of erosion and flooding.
- Promote plant species diversity as forest resilience and adaptive capacity increase with increasing plant species richness (Morin et al. 2018, Watson et al. 2018).

Climate Change Goal 2:

- Establish a formal process for tracking greenhouse gas emissions from state-managed forests. Without this, ODF will not be able to track progress on reducing carbon emissions.
- I strongly support identification ***and protection*** of climate-sensitive habitats and utilizing an internal carbon price to inform management decisions.

Carbon Goal 3:

- Protect mature and old growth forests and manage forests for old growth characteristics, as these forests store the most carbon in biomass and soils and are the most resistant to the impacts of climate change.
- ODF's carbon sequestration plans should be focused on the landscape rather than wood products, as the associated carbon storage in products is beyond the scope of ODF's control and authority.
- Estimate standing inventory of carbon in state forests. This baseline will be needed to grow the state forests carbon stock (live and dead plant materials and their roots and soil carbon).
- Promote longer logging rotations as mature forests are more resilient to the impacts of climate change, store more carbon, and produce more fiber.
- Promote more green tree retention and bigger riparian buffers as these can also ensure more carbon is stored on the landscape and reduce the risk of damage to watersheds.

Goals for Healthy Forested Ecosystems

Restoration Goal 5:

- Managers should focus efforts on the restoration or maintenance of essential ecosystem functions, such as carbon sequestration and storage, hydrologic function (water quality and quantity), soil productivity, and biodiversity.
- I strongly support the strategy of allowing for endemic levels of native insects and disease and suggest ODF expand this to also allow for post-fire/post-disturbance landscapes to recover naturally wherever possible.
- Include a strategy that calls for "modeling priority areas where longer-rotation forestry could prove most beneficial to the enhancement of instream flow/water quantity and prioritize longer rotation management in those areas." Longer rotations in production areas adjacent to riparian buffers would be most likely to improve stream flow and reduce sediment and pesticides reaching the creek.

Pollinators & Invertebrates Goal 7:

- Strategy 7.1 should include protection of foraging sources and specifically call for minimizing ground disturbances to protect pollinator nesting habitat.

Aquatics & Riparian Goal 9:

- ODF should reduce reliance on pesticides that introduce combinations of chemicals into aquatic habitats, degrade water quality, and potentially harm fish species.

Soil Goal 12:

- Utilize precautionary principles and best management practices to protect against soil loss and erosion during logging operations, especially where risk of landslides or erosion is high.
- Evaluate and minimize pesticide use that harms or kills soil invertebrates and degrades soil health. Diverse soils teeming with life are key for carbon sequestration, pest control, and water retention.

Goals for Air Quality, Water Quantity and Quality, and Public Health

Wildfire Goal 4:

- Prioritize inclusion of environmental justice communities in fire planning efforts and ensure wildfire risk information is distributed in multiple accessible languages and formats, especially to non-English speaking community groups.

Drinking Water Goal 10:

- Prioritize protection of water quantity as well as quantity. Streamflow was 50% lower in young plantations relative to mature forests (Segura et al. 2020).
- For strategy 10.4, ensure the State Forest Division also works closely with the Department of Environmental Quality on monitoring and protecting drinking water supplies, in addition to collaborating with the Private Forests Division.
- Ensure the ultimate goals of the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan is to avoid, or aim to eliminate, the use of chemical pesticides and minimize risks to human health and the environment.

Air Quality Goal 11:

- ODF should aim to thoroughly evaluate and minimize negative public health impacts associated with forest management practices that degrade air quality and disproportionately impact vulnerable and rural communities in Oregon.

Recreation, Education & Interpretation Goal 18:

- Ensure equitable access (safe, widely-accessible, and affordable opportunities for those who have traditionally been excluded from and discriminated against in these spaces).

Cultural Goal 21:

- Ensure forest management planning and implementation fully evaluates and redresses environmental justice impacts, facilitates meaningful involvement of impacted communities, and prioritizes distribution of benefits and minimization of burdens to historically underserved communities—including BIPOC, rural, low-income, and forest labor communities.