

**OSU McDonald-Dunn Research Forest FMP  
Community Listening Session #1 (August 31, 2022)  
Public Comments by Category**

The Oregon State University College of Forestry invited the public to participate in the first of three community listening sessions regarding the development of a new forest management plan (FMP) for the McDonald and Dunn Forests. Participants were able to attend in-person and via Zoom. The primary goal of the listening session was for the College to hear from the community, particularly on suggestions in three overarching areas or buckets (based on Research Forest Goals):

1. What should the plan include to ensure the forests provide opportunities for innovative education, research, and extension/outreach
2. What should the plan include to ensure the forests provide opportunities to explore how sustainable management can balance multiple objectives (including conservation, climate and wildfire resiliency, harvest/revenue, and other objectives)
3. What should the plan include to ensure the forests provide opportunities for recreation and community connections

Two additional sessions will be scheduled, likely for the fall 2022 and late winter of 2023. The FMP development process is timed so that the new plan will be ready for implementation in 2024.

## **EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND EXTENSION/OUTREACH**

### **Education and Information Sharing**

- More interpretive materials in the forest so the average visitor can understand the management goals and why activities were implemented in the manner they were implemented.
- Need better interpretation and signage to guide and educate visitors on old growth (and the forest generally)
- Explanation of extent that forest management practices have evolved as a result of research conducted by the college.
- Provide updates on what is being implemented in the forest management
- Provide information on:
  - The multiple objectives, projects, revenue, etc.
  - Historic revenues and future forecasting of revenues and expected expenditures.
  - Transparency of current forest inventory, and an accounting of benefits of either harvest/no harvest that is information about harvests that identifies benefits of harvesting over not harvesting and vice versa.
  - How and why one objective may be traded for another in management decisions.

- Better organization and availability of wildlife information. Include background about historic extent of endangered and other wildlife populations, and what changes that may have happened. Include trends and reasoning for trends. Include information about how forest management decisions may have caused impacts.
- Invasive plant species and the ecological effects of these species.
- Updates for the community about what OSU has done since the last community sessions.

## Research

### Research In General

- Need transparency around ongoing research (no transparency now)
- Consider the intent of Mary McDonald (donor) – the research mission is lost
  - Research has been sacrificed to harvest/revenue
- If a research goal is to serve industry needs – ask them about their needs – make research relevant (not happening now)
- Shift (research/education) focus off traditional forestry and look at current/new/innovative approaches
- Ensure it fits the overall college plan.

### Forest Management & Research

- Unclear if there is a link between research and management action.
- Advance knowledge in more effective resource management
- Examine more complex and alternative solutions that have the most environmental benefit
- Research better management practices
- Sustainable logging
- Less research about cutting down trees
- Fire related research
  - Impacts of fire risk mitigation strategies on forest ecology
- More research on ecosystem services

### Climate Change and Carbon Research

- Address changing climate and conditions
- Carbon, best practices, alternative methods for processing
- Climate change, water (stream flow issues) - impact of forest management approaches.
- Biochar kilns (research and resources to make it more labor/cost effective) and soil health
- Research Douglas fir die-off and diversity needs, in light of changing climate
- Research Oak die-off and savanna restoration to seek solutions (not just \$ oriented, or simple cattle grazing)

### Old Growth Research

- Role of large trees, heritage stands, biodiversity. Preservation of these heritage elements.

- Do research on converting previously cut stands into old growth
  - Focus research on growing trees instead of cutting trees
- Research needed on importance of old growth (and associated wildlife) broadly speaking
  - E.g., as economic driver, tourism generation, etc.
  - Conservation as an economic driver

#### Recreation Research

- Do research related to recreation – integrate into forest research purposes
- Need research on recreation diversity

#### **Extension/Outreach**

- Current perception is that COF is not applying research to actually managing the forest
- How is management protecting homes with expanding urban growth boundaries
- Do more outreach on research that is happening

## **SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT AND BALANCING MULTIPLE OBJECTIVES**

#### **Sustainable Management (in general)**

- Ecological management, not financial driven
- Increase the diversity of tree species and age classifications
- Current tree age spectrum/classifications do not support wildlife (including endangered species)

#### **Balancing Multiple Objectives (in general)**

- Focus on finding balance in how the forest is managed – and communicate that
  - E.g., consider a grand no-harvest experiment
- Balance forest/trail access with impacts to old growth, wildlife, etc.
  - Create reserve areas?

#### **Conservation**

- Prioritize conservation of the forest as the top goal in the updated plan (NSO, any at-risk species, old growth).
- Reduce logging amount and road building
- Less clearcutting and logging overall
- Oak grove restoration
- Promote tree diversity
- Wildlife included as an objective
- Avoid clearcuts near old growth stands (including ones scheduled soon)
- Herbicide application – problematic
  - Need stream testing

- Impacts to wells

### **Climate and Wildfire Resiliency**

- Do assessments for carbon emissions from slash burning
  - Need accountability for doing required assessments
  - Local contractor opportunities available
- Impacts of slash burning (carbon release)
- Uniform monoculture stands are problematic – refocus on biodiversity to address climate change and wildfire
- Urgency in addressing climate change through management – no old growth cutting

### **Harvest/Revenue**

- Finding other sources of money/funding for the forests
- Fire management (if harvest is needed, clearly link those actions to the “why”)
- Not using burn piles
- Forest management standards should change from the historic practices and status quo
- Need to continue to harvest trees for critical resources needs
- 11,000 acres – cannot sustain cut levels needed to fund forest budget

### **Accountability**

- Accountability for management decisions
- Provide transparency and accountability on ideas that the community has already put forward for forest management, to rebuild distrust after cutting old growth

## **RECREATION AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS**

### **Recreation**

#### In General

- Sociological and economic benefit (to communities) research specifically for forest recreation
- Have a clear strategy on promoting or de-promoting certain areas for use (and the forest generally).
  - Have better coordination between COF and forest users/promoters

#### E-Bikes

- Consider more accessibility for e-bikes (supporting a diversity of ages and different abilities). Get more people out on the forest, considering the needs of all users and avoiding conflicts. Existing multi-user trails are fine, but could allow e-bikes where bicycles are allowed. (NEAR TERM NEED - pedal assist bike).
- E-bike policy considerations - speed limits; different classes; etc

- Current e-bike signs are confusing (does the ban encompass all classes?)

### Impacts and Conflicts

- Mitigate trail damage by educating users about etiquette
- Integrate Recreation Advisory Committee study on user group conflicts (consider bell programs for bikes/dogs to notify other trail users)
- Address concerns about trail development techniques - for example running over the roots of old growth trees.
- Opportunity to show multiple uses can work alongside recreational use.
- Address increasing recreation pressure and impacts to recreation from harvest
- Logging needs/impacts are not always compatible with recreation needs
  - But sometimes logging activities support access for recreation (roads)

### Access and Parking

- Provide access to the forest for everyone
- Create more adaptive trails – more accessible trails/opportunities
- Need better maps/kiosks and information on trail closures.
  - Also develop “informed access” for adaptive use
- Need more trails (to let users spread out)
- Why is there a policy that there are no trails in the Dunn forest? Need more parking and more trail connections are needed for a larger area due to recreational use from populations outside the Corvallis area.
- Need more parking
- Consider parking lot impacts
- Opportunities to decrease number of vehicles driving to the forest
  - Provide more remote parking opportunities (for walk/ride-in access)
  - Other ways to get there
  - Shuttle busses
- Need a comprehensive approach to access/parking/use
  - Address future growth (in population and use)
  - Look at fee-based approaches – e.g., annual pass
  - Source of revenue too
- Opportunities for improvements regarding access at the saddle
- Need anti-invasives strategy at access points (e.g., foot/tire washing stations)

### **Community Connections**

- Repair harm that came from the old growth cutting
- Desire for COF to be accountable to EVERYONE, including the community, not just timber or university community
- Include community members in decision-making for forest management
- More collaboration

- The forest is not anyone's backyard
- More public involvement before management planning decisions (more often than annually)
- Concerned about the pressures/negative impacts of development (including roads) that an increasing population will have on the forest. Need to work with the City to integrate planning with trails and roads.

## **PROCESS SUGGESTIONS/CONCERNS**

- Need for process that builds trust and engages public in a meaningful way.
- More outreach for future events
- Desire for specific distribution list to provide updates on this process
- Consider comment box options/alternatives
  - Make it a more interactive opportunity
- Need for representation from specific conservation groups on stakeholder advisory committee. See letter from Oregon Chapter of Sierra Club that identifies what can be done to ensure potentials of forest and community connection.
- Would like to know how input from public meetings will be used.
- How can people contact the stakeholder committee? Who can we write? Who will use that information? What weight will our comments carry with decisions made by committees?
- More opportunities for community members to ask questions directly in real time with those who are involved in the process. The ideas are out there and it's time to move beyond that to talk to OSU. Utilize the public feedback that has already been provided overtime. Feels like we're repeating things and nothing has actually changed.
- Desire to not manage forests that differently (Elliott State Forest vs other OSU forests)
- Transparency and accountability – needed in plan
- Include more representatives in decision-making, even if not affiliated with OSU