Forestry Program for Oregon
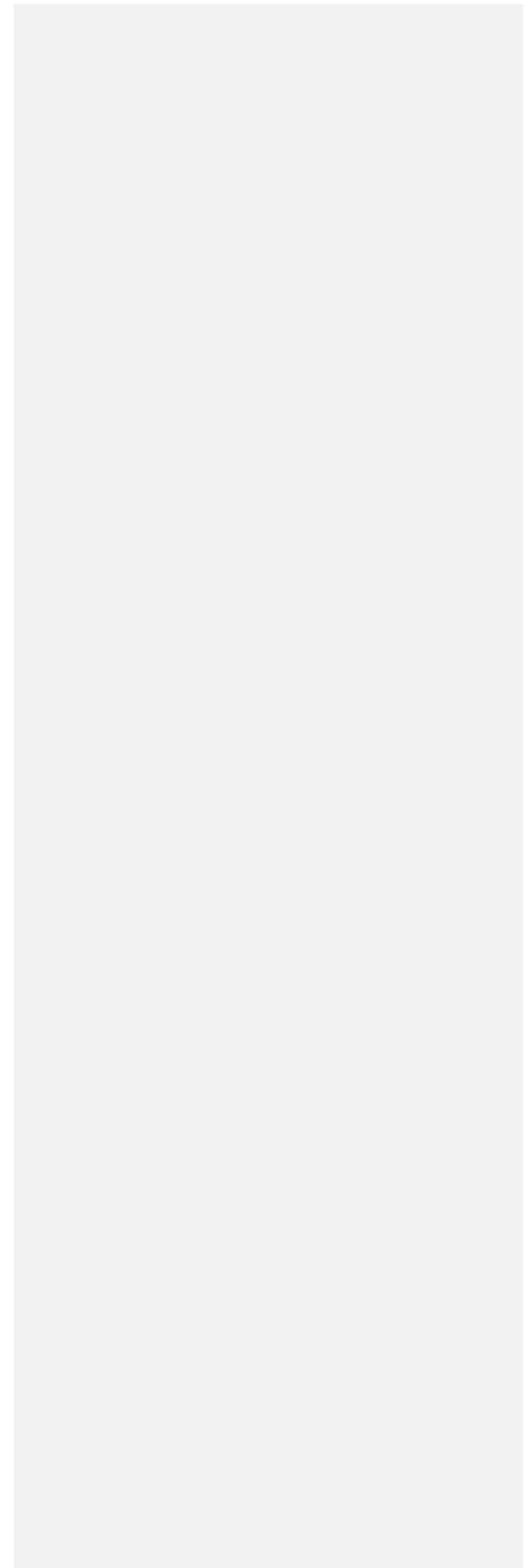
Oregon Board of Forestry

and

Oregon Department of Forestry

Strategic Planning Document

DRAFT

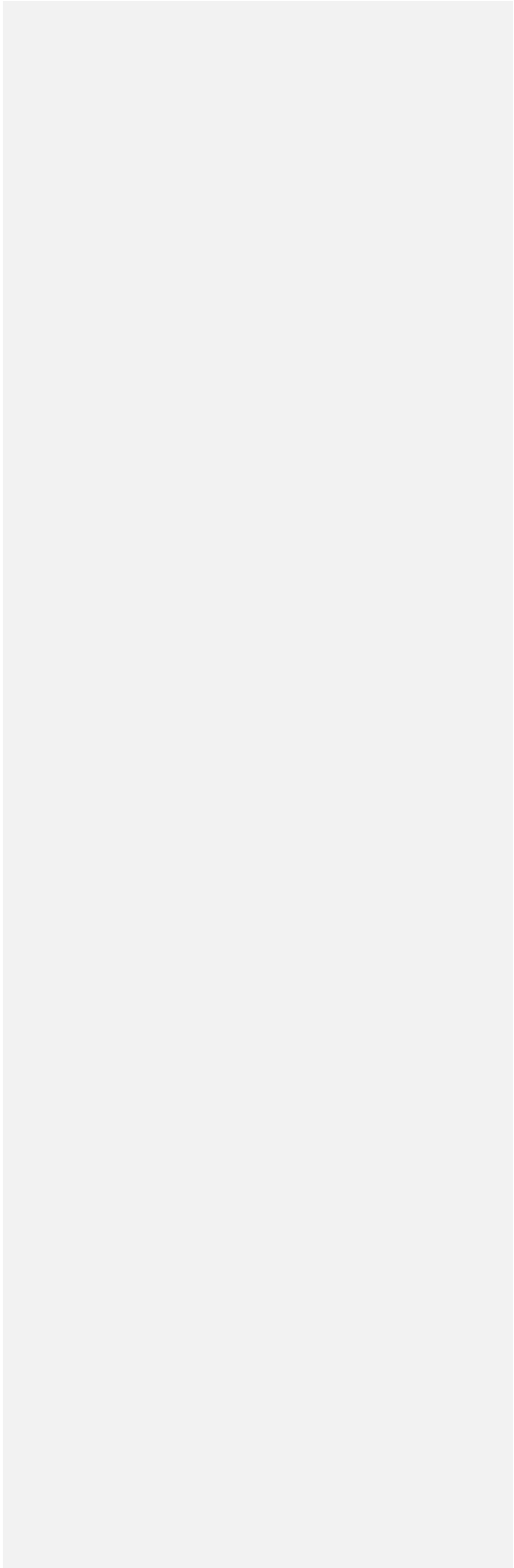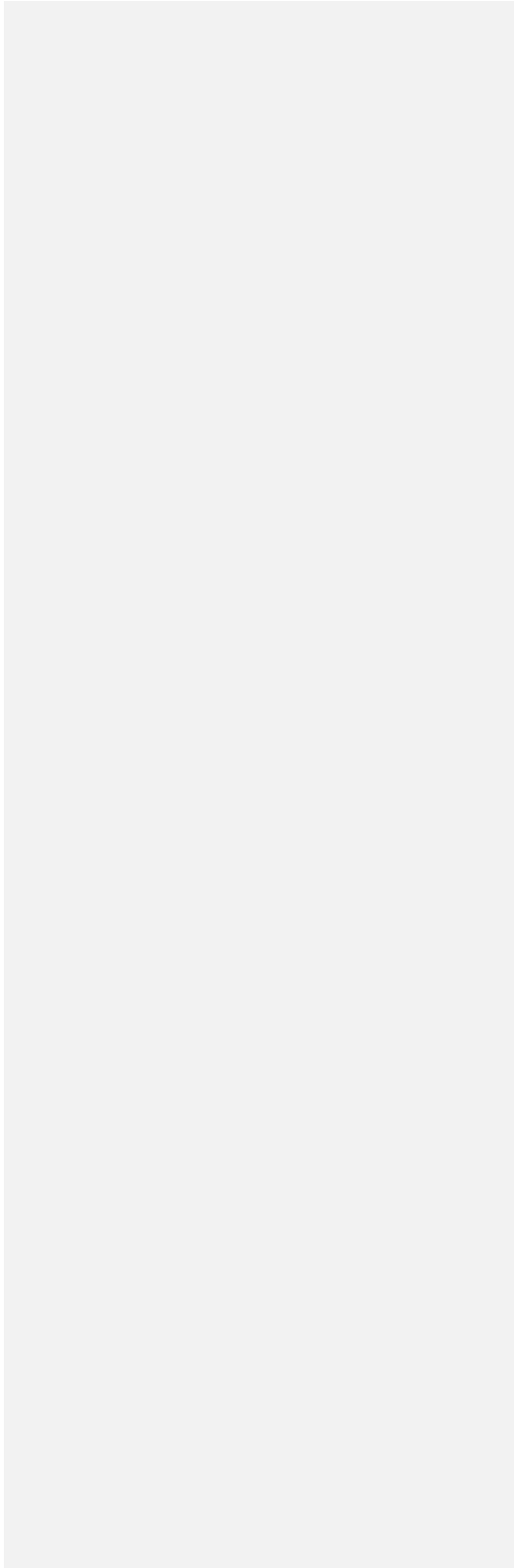Introduction from the Board Chair and the State Forester

Table of Contents:

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Executive Summary:

Mission, Vision, Values, Purpose, Principles:

Vision (Where the organization is headed)

Complex and resilient ecosystems that endure and adapt

Mission (What the organization does)

The joint Mission of the BOF and ODF is to promote and guide management of Oregon forests and fire to benefit all Oregonians.

Values:

Work on the Values is underway but not completed

Purpose (How the organization operates)

Engage people to sustain and adapt forests and landscapes for social, economic, and ecological benefits in their communities.

Principles (What the organization stands for-'organizational values'

- *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in all phases of the hiring and employment process.*
  - *Equitable*
- *Honoring our government to government relationships with the Sovereign Nations the state of Oregon shares land with.*
- *Engaging in relationship building with the community, both urban and rural.*
  - *Community Engagement and Support (Urban)*
- *Having diverse, inclusive, and robust relationships with partner agencies.*
  - *Partnership (Agency e.g. Land use, NGO e.g. American Forestry, $20M,*
  - *Landowners)*
- *Creating and maintaining trust between our staff and the community through active transparency from leadership.*
  - *Transparency (create/maintain trust)*
- *Remain on the forefront of reducing impacts of climate change on our landscape.*
- *Maintaining healthy forests with longevity and ongoing monitoring.*
  - *Longevity of Public Forests (GPV)*
  - *Active Health and Monitoring*
- *Robust, Evident, and Stable Regulatory Structure*
- *Landscape focused, recognizing the value of diverse objectives across ownerships*

Commented [1]: Board and Agency together

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- *Relevant and understandable, thus garnering more support that leads to implementation.*
- *Fire Risk and Management*

About the Board of Forestry (est. 1907):

History, current make up, et cetera.

About the Department of Forestry (est. 1911):

History, structure, etc.

Climate-Smart Forestry in Oregon for a Resilient Future

Climate-smart forestry is a holistic approach for addressing the management needs related to the existential pressures exerted from climate change. Recent impacts go beyond the biotic aspects of the forest and include social dimensions including economics and State financial obligations. Abiotic and biotic forces are driving a divergence of existing ecosystems and the future environment.

The Oregon Department of Forestry and the Oregon Board of Forestry have accepted a definition of climate-smart forestry that includes three legs: adaptation, mitigation, and the social dimension (including communities and economic aspects). Building the Forestry Program for Oregon around this stool will help the Board and the Department be in line with each other on climate policy. It also helps to align the work the State is doing with its federal counterparts which have been directed to center climate-smart agriculture and forestry in their own work and processes.

So, what does a climate-smart forestry framework look like?

In previous iterations of the Forestry Program for Oregon, the Board has identified sustainable forest management as a key principle. Climate-smart forestry has been built out of sustainable agriculture and links with previous efforts to build criterion and indicators for sustainable forest management, like the Montreal Protocol.

Starting with **adaptation**. The changing environment has passed through tipping points that forests are unlikely to move back through. Forests see this through more extreme events, longer and more severe fire seasons, and a megadrought not seen since the dark ages (roughly 1200 years ago). These impacts do not spare any management approach or landowner. Adaptation policy can help forests adapt towards more resilient landscapes through human intervention. Changing forest structure, different management approaches, and incentivizing efforts to incorporate climate change into management decisions will be key. Additionally, providing tools that help forest landowners and managers assess their vulnerability to climate change can have broad benefits.

Next think of climate (or atmospheric carbon) **mitigation**. To reach internationally accepted targets (global temperature rise less than 1.5°C) to limit catastrophic impacts from climate change the global population will need to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere as well as work on adaptation measures. Natural climate solutions like forests, agricultural lands, and blue carbon all offer options to increase this mitigation through biologic sequestration. Forests, especially those on the west side of the state, are widely regarded as being highly capable ecosystems for this needed sequestration. Policy approaches and levers that can be utilized include incentivizing practices to increase stored carbon in the forests, reducing emissions from forest activities (e.g., limiting slash burning and increasing alternative slash use), among others.

Social license to achieve the other parts of CSF comes from the **social dimension**, a bifurcated part of CSF. Made up of communities and economies, this social aspect of CSF considers the impacts of adaptation and mitigation action on people, personal and community health, and community and rural economies. Utilizing climate smart forestry to create healthy, resilient forests that also provide ecosystem and economic benefits can help lift disadvantaged, underserved, natural resource dependent, and those living with intergenerational poverty. This adaptive management will require a scene change from past management and there are opportunities for increased partnership with both public and private entities as well as community-based organizations and the people that they serve.

Climate-Smart Forestry will be used to stich together the various aspects of this FPFO and will be present in each of the various goals that the Board and Department have mutually developed. More on this context, the structure of the goals and their assessment is on the following pages.

Framework of the Goals:

The goals are the high level policy areas of importance to the Board and Agency. The goals will each be run through the Climate Smart Forestry lens identify how they to address the climate adaptation, mitigation, and social dimensions of forestryimpactsaspects that they address and how. This will link them all back to climate-smart forestry and aims to develop a robust and scientifically sound strategic plan for resilient Oregon forests. Within each goal, partner agencies and constituencies are identified to achieve the actions, though some may change over the life of each specific goal depending on stage and need.

Strategies:

The strategies are the broad brushes that are used to successfully achieve the goal. This section will include specific strategic initiatives being advanced by the Agency. These link with the challenges by providing mechanisms to resolve them and provide the guidance for the more specific actions.

Metrics:

Identify the measurable changes in relation to specific goals and strategies that have been identified. Linkage between the departments monitoring efforts and potentially new lines of monitoring will need to be employed to accurately assess the trends. Metrics will be used for the evolution of the Actions and Strategies that are employed to meet the Goals. Metrics will be determined through consideration of available data, resources, and ability to measure and track the metric. Metrics will need to include information that the board and department have the ability to alter or influence (e.g., not able to change the legal status of the forest landscape, market demands for processed forest products, or employment trends in an ever evolving market). Consideration of these measures should include the ability to look back in time as well as project into the future to ascertain if the Action and Strategy are meeting the intended targets.

Challenges:

Identification of the barriers to achieving the goal. These can be either anthropocentric (e.g., economics, community concerns, etc.) or environmental (e.g., climate change, increasing wildfire scope, etc.). some of these challenges are not specifically resolvable but identified actions can work to ameliorate or mitigate their impacts as well as providing broader mitigating impacts for the entire system.

Actions:

Specific examples of the day-to-day work that takes place in the department to achieve the goal. While some of these actions have been core business for more than a century (e.g., protection from fire or forest health), others will be new or may not have begun at the time of this FPFO completion and adoption. Actions are the operational side of this FPFO and are largely identified by agency leadership (Directors Office, Executive Team, and Leadership Team working together with the Board).

Goals:

Healthy Forests:

Definition/Identification:

> Oregon's forests are under pressures from climate change, past management choices, and changes in land use. These are compounding to create forests that are arguably in an unhealthy and unsustainable condition that is not resistant or resilient to the forces acting upon them. These issues cross all ownership types, ecoregions, and societal interests; however, the effects are felt by all Oregonians. To that end, it is in the interest of the Board and the Department to work on achieving resilient forests through its own strategies and actions and by cooperating and sharing the load with partner agencies, landowners, the Governor's Office, and the Legislature to be successful in increasing the pace and scale of adaptation across the landscape.

Strategies:

1. Forest health treatments increase resistance to catastrophic wildfire, insect infestations, or disease outbreaks (Adaptation)
2. Establishment and continuation of healthy forests that will sequester carbon while providing for a broad suite of ecosystem benefits for forest communities and human needs alike (Mitigation and Social)
3. Community engagement for forest resilience work (Social)

3.

Metrics:

> TBD

Challenges:

1. Longer fire seasons
2. Lack of funding
3. Changes in workforce and labor supply
4. What to do with biomass generated

Actions:

- Implementation of the 20-year Strategic Vision
- Utilization of FFR
- Incentivization of forest resilience work through cost shares and other measures
- Assisted migration efforts
- Workforce development

Partners, Partner Agencies and Constituents:

- Sovereign Tribes
- USDA Forest Service
- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Forest Collaboratives and related groups
- Forest Industry and related groups
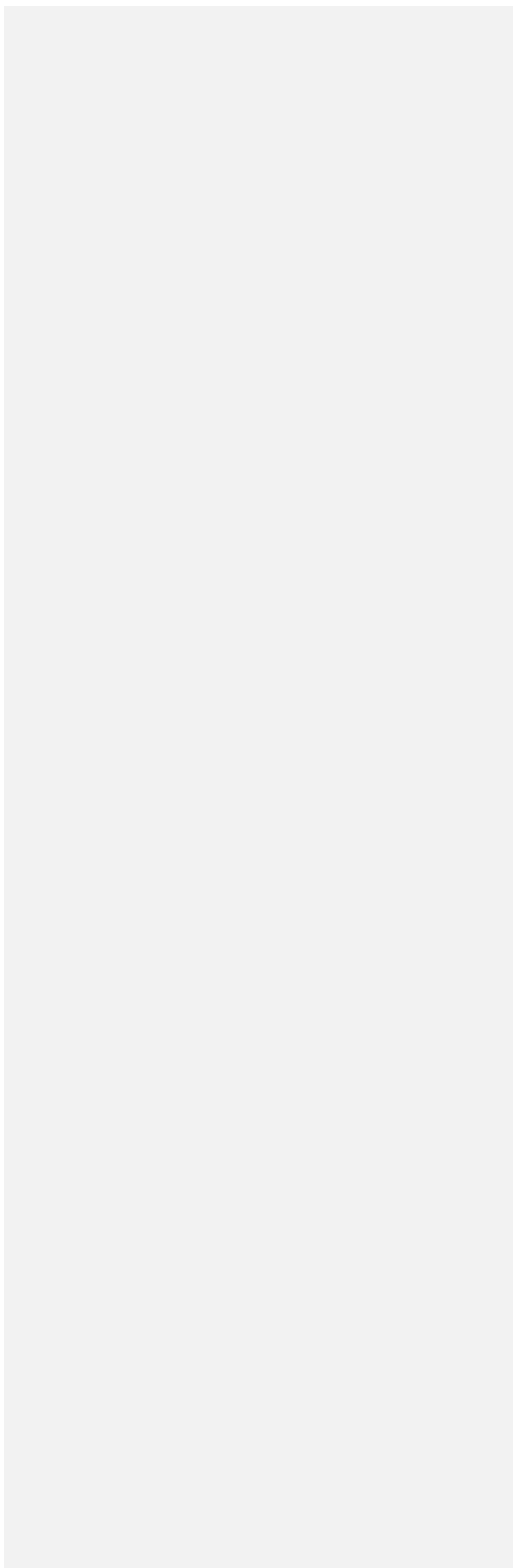
Climate Leadership (Mitigation, adaptation):

Definition/Identification:

> Climate change is affecting al of the departments work: larger more intense fires, increased tree stress, more variable water flows and increasingly sever droughts (worst since the Dark Ages). This puts added stress on people, budgets, and ecosystems. To be leaders in reducing climate change impacts, the department should look to both mitigation (atmospheric carbon removal) and adaptation (right tree right place, conservation of biodiversity in key habitats, changes in fire management) while ensuring that there is a flow of fiber to the wood products sector.

Strategies:

1. Engaging carbon markets
2. Extending rotations through incentivization
3. Guiding adaptive measures (different densities, alternative and more diverse species selections, etc.)
4. Identification and conservation of biodiverse ecosystems
5. Adapting fire management tactics and further coordination through the complete and coordinated fire management system

Metrics:

Challenges:

Actions:

Partners, Partner Agencies and Constituents:

Resilient Populations and Communities (water, air, access):

Definition/Identification

> Communities and populations are increasing concerned with water supplies and water quality due to drought and land management, air quality decline from increasing wildfire smoke.

Strategies:

Metrics:

Challenges:

Actions:

Partners, Partner Agencies and Constituents:

Supporting Livelihoods and Economic Opportunities:

Definition/Identification

> Forestry has long been a key part of Oregon's economy and natural resource dependent communities. This continues to be the case as the board and department look to the future. There is, however, always a need to look for additional economic opportunity including emerging technologies and markets (e.g., mass timber), changes in need and focus (e.g., wildfire risk reduction and climate adaptation efforts), and a need to leverage a variety of funding sources to accomplish work and support communities (e.g., public-private partnerships).

Strategies:

Metrics:

Challenges:

Actions:

Partners, Partner Agencies and Constituents:

Organizational Excellence:

Definition/Identification

Strategies:

Metrics:

Challenges:

Actions:

Partners, Partner Agencies and Constituents:

Definitions:

References:

Development, Coordinators, Acknowledgements:

Attachments: May be links, summaries, or references

E.g., CCCP, 20-year strategy, SF FMP/HCP, list of key recent legislation, etc.