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# Vision For Oregon's Forests

*Oregon Board of Forestry*  
and  
*Oregon Department of Forestry*

Strategic Planning Document

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## Table of Contents: WILL BE INSERTED LATER

### VISION and MISSION

**Shared Vision** - developed at October 2022 retreat  
*Complex and resilient forest ecosystems that endure and adapt*

**Joint Mission** - developed by FPFO subcommittee on 1/18  
*The joint Mission of the BOF and ODF is to promote and guide management of Oregon forests and fire to benefit all Oregonians.*

**Agency Purpose** - developed by ODF Executive Team and reviewed by FPFO subcommittee

*Engage communities, staff, and resources to sustain and adapt forests and landscapes for social, economic, and ecological benefits.*

### BOARD/AGENCY INTENT, PRINCIPLES and CONTEXT

#### **Intent**

The Board of Forestry recognizes that the overarching forest management strategy for Oregon needs to be refreshed in important ways to be responsive to a rapidly changing environment, and to be responsive to the call for a bold, forward-looking policy approach that will best serve forests and people in Oregon into the future.

#### **Principles**

This “Vision for Oregon’s Forests” is anchored in understanding the following:

- 1) **Honoring our government-to-government relationships with the Sovereign Nations the state of Oregon shares land with.**
- 2) A comprehensive, all-lands approach to forest management policy will reflect the unique landscape and forestland ownership context of Oregon.

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- a) **This includes tribal partnerships and integration of traditional ecological knowledge.**
- b) This includes close coordination with other state and federal agencies and commissions to accomplish its work.
- c) *Understanding and honoring the complexity of the relationships Oregonians have with their natural resources and recognizing the value of diverse objectives across ownerships.*
- 3) Policies will address global and local climate **change and changing** social demographics and associated cultures which influence our ability to meet expectations from our state's forests.
- 4) Policies will strive for a **harmonious** relationship between human cultures and forests as ecological systems.
- 5) The Board of Forestry and the Oregon Department of Forestry will be responsive and adaptable to environmental and social change.
  - a) **It will create and maintain a diverse, equitable and inclusive organization that houses a well-trained, service-focused workforce.**
  - b) **It will build and maintain diverse, inclusive, and trust-based relationships with Oregonians, partners, urban and rural communities, and local governments through community engagement, collaboration, communication, transparency and accountability:**
- 6) Forest management policy will recognize a shifting workforce that includes inter-generational change as well as societal expectations around how we work, and the need for a trained and skilled workforce to support the work needed in Oregon forests today and tomorrow.
  - a) **Promoting economic development and diversification in the forest sector that promotes the adaptive capacity of forests.**
- 7) **Forest management policies will focus on economic development and diversification in the forest sector that promotes the adaptive capacity of forests.**
- 8) Statewide policies will be based on the **most current and best available** science, rooted within a legal framework, applicable in a place-based manner to meet local, regional and statewide expectations of Oregonians.
  - a) *Recognizing and acting on place based approaches where appropriate.*
  - b) *Using technology, best available science and recognized best practices to guide agency operations to build and enhance the resiliency of*

**Commented [1]:** Climate change effects, perhaps? We don't move the needle at a global scale, but we can take measures to ensure adaptive capacity here.

**Commented [2]:** Is reciprocal a better word. Not that it is likely to be 100% reciprocal, but harmonious is squishy in terms of policy.

**Commented [3]:** This is awkward here, given that the context is so heavy to workforce. This has to do more with developing new economic opportunities. To me, fits better under one of the other principles.

**Commented [4]:** Redundant?

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*Oregon's forests, reduce the impacts of climate change, minimize wildfire impacts and encourage biodiversity.*

### Context

The Board recognizes several factors that influence and are impacted by forest management strategies:

Statutory and other regulatory requirements directed by decision makers and agencies **outside** ODF. This includes the Private Forest Accord, State Forests Forest Management Plan, Oregon's Landscape Resiliency Strategy, Climate Change and Carbon Plan, and federal and state environmental laws and regulations.

Urban / rural dynamics nationally and in Oregon have become increasingly more contentious **since 2020**, leading to perceptions of ideological and other gaps between urban populations and rural populations. As an example, there have been different views held regarding expectations for both strong climate driven strategies that could lead to long-term forest sustainability and support for struggling rural timber dependent communities. Delicate consideration of ALL Oregonians and communities in Oregon is paramount to forest policy in this state.

Climate impacts are felt in every corner of the state, affecting safety, public health and economic stability, as well as the ability of Oregon forests to continue to provide many of the same benefits that they have in the past.

*Building and maintaining diverse, inclusive, and trust-based relationships with Oregonians, partners, urban and rural communities, and local governments through community engagement, collaboration, communication, transparency and accountability: A call for more inclusive, accountable decision making that recognizes inequities in our systems requires consideration for engagement and education of all communities and for policy makers to understand the*

**Commented [5]:** Some of these are not outside of ODF, such as State Forests FMP and CCCP, which are documents approved by the Board.

**Commented [6]:** I strongly advise against rooting this in a specific presidential election year. This has been increasing for decades, and the roots of the "rural/urban divide" political scheme goes back to the mid-1800s at least.

**Commented [7R6]:** I would suggest speaking objectively to the economics, so that other divisive value conversations don't come into it. Something like:

Rural, urban and suburban populations have differing perceptions and perspectives on their relationships to forests, and how forests should be managed to benefit human populations and safeguard natural resources. While the economies of these areas are all connected to forests, rural communities are traditionally more directly dependent on forest management activities. Urban and suburban communities are connected via secondary manufacturing and marketing of finished forest products. Forest-dependent recreation activities are also supported by a variety of jobs that span the rural, urban and suburban boundaries.

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needs of all communities including those which have been historically marginalized.

*Creating and maintaining a diverse, equitable and inclusive organization that houses a well-trained, service-focused workforce: Workforce supply and demand are changing as labor costs continue to increase despite growing uncertainty about the ability of managed forests to cover management costs in a dynamic climate and social structure.*

*Honoring our government-to-government relationships with the Sovereign Nations the state of Oregon shares land with: The State has a unique relationship and obligation to government- to- government engagement with the 9 federally recognized Tribes in Oregon. Non-tribal managers could benefit from each tribe’s willingness to advise non-tribal forest managers regarding incorporation of tribal practices into forest management that would lead to increased resilience and sustainability for future generations.*

**Commented [8]:** We should consider how creative we get with the language here, in terms of making sure we stay in the right space with the 9.

**Commented [9R8]:** As we talked about during the meeting.

## About the Board of Forestry (est. 1907):

*-under development, ODF Public Affairs drafting*

## About the Department of Forestry (est. 1911):

*-under development, ODF Public Affairs drafting*

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## Climate-Smart Forestry in Oregon for a Resilient Future

*- drafted by ODF technical staff*

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

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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.

**Commented [10]:** I've brought this up several times internally, but it doesn't seem to change. The term "dark ages" hasn't been in favor with the majority of modern historians for some time now. If it was 1,200 years ago, then good enough just to say that, or give an actual approximate date range.

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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 sea 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 stitch 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.

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## Terms and Definitions Key:

Goals are the high level policy areas of importance to the Board and Agency.

Each goal identifies partners ODF and the BOF need to achieve the goals, and the actions describe where ODF is assumed to lead the action, influence the action, or co-perform with action with others.

Strategies are the broad brushes that are used to successfully achieve a goal.

The strategies should reflect the Climate Smart Forestry lens to address climate adaptation, mitigation, and social dimensions of forestry.

Metrics gauge the measurable changes to specific goals and strategies. Metrics will be determined through:

- consideration of available data, resources, and ability to measure and track the metric;
- identifying those actions the board and department have the ability to alter or influence; and
- 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.

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Challenges identify barriers to achieving the goal. These can be social, economic or environmental.

Actions are the operational aspects of the FPFO and are largely identified by agency leadership working together with the Board.

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## Goals

### Functional and dynamic forest ecosystems (“resilient forests”):

Definition/Identification:

Goal: (Under construction) “Policy and management decisions support forests to persist in a functional and dynamic state in the face of change. Functional and dynamic forests are complex, biodiverse, and adaptable.

Context: Forests in a fragile state struggle to adapt during disturbances or stressors. Adaptation is needed. Significant environmental changes are occurring related to climate, society and economics, calling for a shift in the reciprocal relationship between humans with the natural environment.

Strategies: *to be developed and reflect Climate Smart Forestry pillars*

Forest complexity: Engage with experts in Pacific Northwest forest ecology to adopt definitions for structural and functional forest complexity components for different ecoregions within Oregon, at multiple spatial scales (stand-level to landscape-level) and that recognize the shift of components across the landscape and over time. Strategies include-

- Use Existing Stewardship Agreement options: Promote Stewardship Agreements as a mechanism to further forest complexity components, including diversity of planted species, broader variety of forest stand densities, and increased retention of legacy structures (live green trees, snags, and downed wood) during harvest activities.
- Support additional incentives: Support statutory changes that allow for tax incentives for private landowners who implement Stewardship Agreements that make meaningful contributions towards forest complexity goals.



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- Forest Legacy: Continue to support Forest Legacy efforts to retain and manage forests for diverse goals, including forest complexity goals.
- Regulatory options: Adopt new, and revise existing, Oregon Administrative Rules pertaining to harvest and reforestation to incentivize retention and development of forest complexity components.
- Direct Management Actions: Direct management on state forests through FMP Performance Measures to ensure a diverse range of forest structural conditions in all forest age classes.

Align with National Wildfire Cohesive Strategy goals:

- Restore and maintain landscapes (further aligned with Oregon's Landscape Resiliency Strategy goals)
- Fire-adapted communities
- Wildfire response

Biodiversity:

Water quality: Given climate and legal constraints, challenge to develop strategies around these. Strategies for collaboration, coordination and planning across agencies will be critical. Beyond the HCPs and regulations, what strategies, all-lands, can be activated?

Air quality

Social license:

- Educated and engaged communities
- Workforce capacity
- Communication: inward and outward looking related to conveying goals and activities guiding the Dept. Consistent and accurate flow of information/messages.

**Metrics:** *to be developed by the Agency after Strategies and Goals are determined*

**Challenges:**

**Actions:**

**Partners, Partner Agencies and Constituents:**

- Sovereign Tribes
- USDA Forest Service

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- 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

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## Climate Leadership:

**Definition/Identification ( DRAFT from ODF staff, adapted from CCCP):** Make forestry in Oregon a leader in climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Board and Department will be leaders in promoting climate-smart forest policies and actions that achieve their vision by operationalizing strategies, implementing actions, and measuring progress to achieving climate goals. When making decisions, the Board and Department will consider the climate impacts of those decisions,

### Strategies:

*From Climate Change and Carbon Plan (approved by the Board of Forestry on 11/3/2021)*

**Silviculture:** Establish a just and equitable transition to climate-informed silviculture and climate-smart forestry that optimizes climate mitigation and adaptation, while maintaining a sustainable flow of wood products to ensure long-term resource benefits and viability of the forest products industry and flow of long-lived forest products.

**Fire:** Modernize Oregon’s complete and coordinated wildfire protection system to respond to the increased severity of wildfire. Promote fire and smoke-adapted communities in the wildland urban interface and beyond, to mitigate the impacts of climate-induced increases in wildfire severity.

**State forests management:** Lead by example and demonstrate climate-smart forest management on State Forests to achieve adaptation, mitigation, and the achievement of forest resource goals

**Restoration:** Accelerate the pace, scale, and quality of climate appropriate forest restoration to increase the resilience to increased wildfire, drought, and biotic disturbance severity and incidence. Support implementation of the recommendations of the Governor’s Council on Wildfire Response.

**Urban forests:** Increase the extent and resilience of urban and community forests to maximize the climate mitigation and health benefits of urban forest canopy.

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**Post-fire:** Facilitate and encourage the reforestation of areas burned by wildfire and afforestation of low-productivity lands that are understocked or not in forest use.

**Conservation:** Support a strong, but flexible, Land Use Planning System as a cornerstone of maintaining Oregon's forests on private lands.

**Research and monitoring:** Maintain a research and monitoring program to track the status and trends of ecological, economic, and social indicators and the effects of climate change and to track progress related to this plan.

**Metrics:** *to be developed by the Agency after Strategies and Goals are determined*

**Challenges:**

**Actions:**

**Partners, Partner Agencies and Constituents:**

## Resilient Communities (people-centric goals)

**Goal:** Forest policy development and management decisions should be viewed through the lens of fostering healthy relationships with human communities and supporting community resilience. Forests support resilient human communities to be able to respond and adapt to anticipated and unanticipated social, economic, and ecological change.

**Context:** Forests have both direct and indirect effects on quality of life, economic opportunities for communities, and ecologic conditions in rural, suburban, and urban areas across the state. Resilience varies regionally and between communities of place and culture. Forests provide a range of benefits to Oregonians and contribute to community resilience. Place-based and scientifically informed management approaches support forests to contribute a full range of benefits to enhance community resilience by meeting their needs.

DRAFT Strategies

Educated and engaged community on forest issues

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- Support science-based education and discourse about forests in communities
- Help communities monitor changes in the forest and be prepared to adapt
- Engage communities, including but not limited to local communities, in forest planning and operations for all uses
- *Placeholder for language on safe access (for recreation, culture, education, and appreciation)*
- *Placeholder for language on tribal engagement*

### Access

- *Promote access on all forestlands that is both inclusive and welcoming, for a wide range of needs that are important to all Oregonians.*
- *ODF will work with partners to incentivize access across forest ownership types in a manner that respects private ownership, recognizes landowner objectives, and avoids natural resource damage.*
- *Suggest 7/19: Recognize cultural issues impacting access, in addition to distinct section on tribal co-management / G2G relationship.*

### Economic viability/vitality

- Next generation - invest in high school and community college programs that
- focus on forestry
- Embrace new technology and pilot projects for non-traditional forest products
- Create jobs in forest management, focused on climate mitigation and adaptation
- Develop scalable and adaptable infrastructure of the forest sector economy
- Work with communities to develop diversified revenue streams that allow
- communities to be adaptable

### Public health:

- Access to healthy forests for recreation, culture, education, and appreciation
- Clean water and air

### Policy/regulatory certainty

- Policy should be based on peer-reviewed social science and biophysical science policy as well as traditional ecological knowledge
- Avoid divisive language and approaches. Find common ground that brings people from diverse communities together toward common goals.

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### Management across ownerships

- Shared Stewardship: Forests are managed collaboratively across ownerships, promoting diverse management strategies that maintain environmental and economic values
- Where appropriate, encourage federal forest restoration without compromising environmental values
- *Placeholder for Tribal co-management*

### Wildfire resiliency

- Involving advancement of building codes, defensible space, strategic fuel reduction, and prescribed burning.
- 20-Year Landscape Resiliency Plan
- National Cohesive Strategy

### Place-Based Strategies

- Integrate climate-smart tree establishment and management into county planning across the spectrum of local cultures and community values

### Diversity of Human Communities (*placeholder language needs review*)

Metrics: *to be developed by the Agency after Strategies and Goals are determined*

Challenges:

Actions:

Partners, Partner Agencies and Constituents:

## Organizational Excellence: *drafted by ODF Executive Team, as of 4/13/23*

### Definition/Identification

Oregon state agencies have an obligation to the Oregonians they serve to continually improve business processes to promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness in their delivery of services. This includes being transparent, accountable and fiscally responsible. In order to achieve this, ODF's operations must be integrated and aligned through shared common policies, goals and objectives that support direction provided by the Board, Executive Branch and Legislature. Engaging with partners, urban and rural communities, local governments and Sovereign Nations is essential. Operational excellence requires a well-trained, highly competent and diverse staff of professionals.

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### Strategies:

1. Create and maintain strategic and operational plans that support accomplishment of FPFO goals.
2. Collaboratively develop strategic and operational plans.
3. Work with other state and federal agencies to leverage efficiencies and opportunities to accomplish individual and shared goals and objectives.
4. Increase transparency into agency operations and performance through clear, accurate and easily accessible reporting.
5. Continue to build a strong and diverse agency workforce.
6. Establish and maintain visible regulatory programs with consistent enforcement of laws and rules.

### Metrics:

1. Board, ODF staff, external agencies, stakeholders and public indicate that common themes of FPFO are clearly visible and understood in other agency plans.
2. Clear reporting of engagement process for plans from standing advisory committees and workgroups created for specific planning efforts.
3. Monitoring plans that clearly articulate the efficient use of ODF and external resources.
4. Usage statistics for dashboards and number of information requests received that are answered by existing dashboards.
5. Reporting on recruitment venues used and diversity statistics on candidate pools and resulting hires.
6. Number of agreements with colleges and universities, numbers of interns and diversity statistics on interns.

### Challenges:

- Current unfunded positions in the Planning Branch to help coordinate plan development across the agency.
- Lack of consistent process for engagement of tribes, partners, stakeholders and public in planning processes. Some standing committees not being leveraged to their full potential.
- Monitoring positions and processes that are contained within different divisions.
- Lack of existing dashboards and integration of supporting information systems across agency.
- (Need HR help on challenges for recruiting)
- Lack of existing intern program and cost of sustaining program.

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### Actions:

- Transparency: Create and maintain dashboards for key metrics that are publicly available on ODF's external website. Provide internal and external access to areas of interest like status of enforcement actions, budget setting process, and public records requests.
- Workforce: Continue to incorporate DEI tools into ODF hiring practices and expand advertising of recruiting positions to broaden employee diversity.
- Workforce: Reinstitute and expand intern program.

### Partners, Partner Agencies and Constituents:

- DAS
- Sibling state agencies
- Universities and community colleges
- Federal land managers

## PLACEHOLDER FOR CALL-OUT BOXES

The purpose and content for the call out boxes is to provide context for the concept, a slightly deeper dive into the concept, and an attempt to clarify and define the concept. It could also include links or citations to other descriptor documentation.

Current topic list of call- out boxes subject to revisions, include:

- a) National Wildfire Cohesive Strategy
- b) Diversity, equity and inclusion - Organization Commitments: *Refer to the DEI internal doc. To nurture and sustain healthy and productive communities, we must consider the needs and interests of every community member, particularly those whose needs and interests have been overlooked, disregarded, or left out in the past. This requires us to build relationships with, engage with, and listen to everyone in our communities, with particular attention to those who are most vulnerable or have been excluded from public decision making.*
- c) Tribal relations (GtoG responsibilities and commitments; co-stewardship and partnership opportunities)
- d) Place Based implementation
- e) Ecosystem services



## **Oregon Board of Forestry**

### **September 7 Vision for Oregon's Forests Agenda Topic**

**Purpose:** *Today's discussion of the Vision for Oregon's Forests is intended to bring the full Board and ODF Executive Team together for a discussion about the latest draft developed through the FPFO Subcommittee, and advance the content within the Goals section.*

11:30 Vision for Oregon's Forests (formerly FPFO) Intent and Context

*Board and Executive Team will discuss and affirm alignment about the intent and context for this Vision for Oregon's Forests. Are we still aligned in foundational intent? Have we captured the important contextual themes describing the backdrop of this work?*

12:00 Break for Lunch

12:30 Draft Concept Review

*Revisit Resilient Forests Goal: The Board/ET will review updates to this section, determine any further suggested changes.*

*Review Climate Leadership Goal: The Board/ET will review and refine the definition, determine alignment to adopt Carbon and Climate Change Plan strategies.*

*Call-Out Boxes: Board members will be asked to consider volunteering to team with a staff person to develop brief, concise content that better defines or provides clarity around some of the concepts identified in the broader Vision. Topics include place based strategies/activities; wildfire cohesive strategy; ecosystem services; and DEI*

1:45 Next Steps/Wrap Up

2:00 Adjourn