

Committee for Family Forestlands
Minutes
January 31, 2008

A meeting of the Committee for Family Forestlands (CFF) was held in the Sunpass Room at ODF's Salem compound.

Committee members present:

Ron Cease (retiring)	Gary Springer
Bill Arsenault	Craig Shinn
Sarah Deumling	Brad Withrow-Robinson

Committee members absent:

Greg Miller	Ned Livingston
Mike Cloughesy	Fritz Ellett (formally resigned)

Staff present:

Peter Daugherty	Kevin Weeks
Julie Welp	Ted Lorensen

Guests:

Rex Storm, AOL	Mike Gaudern, OSWA
Chris Jarmer, OFIC	

Agenda Items:

1. Introduction of New Members
2. Recognition of Ron Cease
3. Review Agenda
4. Approval of November 28, 2007, Minutes
5. OSWA Presentation
6. Highlights of Tree Farm Presentation/Update on 2007 Storm
7. Change in Members, Committee Procedures
8. Discussion of Symposium Priority Issues
9. Other Business

Introductions

As this was the first meeting for several new committee members, everyone introduced themselves and their background. Joining the committee are Craig Shinn, as Committee Chair and citizen-at-large; Brad Withrow-Robinson, as OSU's ex-officio member, and Sarah Duemling, representing the conservation community. Fritz Ellett has formally resigned from the committee. His position will need to be filled, preferable by someone from eastern Oregon. Gary Springer has accepted the vice-chair role. Ron Cease has finished his terms with the committee. Later in the meeting, Rex Storm was asked to join the committee representing the forestry consulting community. He accepted, becoming the fifth ex-officio member.

Ron Cease Recognition

The committee recognized Ron Cease's many years and many contributions with the Committee for Family Forestlands. He was presented with a plaque and many warm stories and comments.

Approve minutes from November 28, 2007

The minutes were accepted with changes.

OSWA Presentation

Mike Gaudern gave a presentation on OSWA's strategic direction. OSWA held several discussions about their organization and its mission and vision for Oregon's family forestlands. They came up with a vision that could be related to the landscape, that people could visualize. The mission has been simplified to "provide opportunity to family woodland owners." The three strategies of the membership group include: to administrate, educate, and advocate. "Administrate" focuses on programs, initiatives, and outcomes and indicators OSWA uses to allocate more staff time to developing revenue generating projects with the overall outcome of the strategy is the OSWA leadership roles being apparent to everyone, and OSWA running more effectively. "Educate" means both internally and externally. There was a very important need to bring their members up to speed with the latest work of their executive, the directors who represent them, and policy makers at the state level. The main educational strategy is to increase the knowledge level of family woodland owners and to engage members with day-to-day decision making. "Advocate" includes a grass roots action network that's fairly effective at the state level. It presents certain challenges among the membership and OSWA is always trying to improve its communication with outreach to the members to get their input. This is also where OSWA and Family Forestlands of Oregon blend together. The OSWA and Oregon Tree Farm System partnership is currently under development and will be adapted to OSWA's strategies.

Mike continued his OSWA's presentation with their Howdy Neighbor project. There are thousands of family woodland owners throughout the state that are neighbors of the urban areas and it's important that the two groups interact and get to know each other. The group then turned the discussion to the part of OSWA's vision that addresses the goal of family forestland owners thriving by the year 2050. Does that mean that forestland owners are not thriving now and should be by 2050 or are they thriving now and should still do so by 2050? A self-assessment from the symposium suggests that many landowners do not think they are thriving now. There is still a lot of work for landowners to reach a "thriving" status by 2050.

Mike, then, began the discussion the OSWA's family forestland survival issues. The first issue addresses the generational land ownership. The average age of a family forestland owner is 65, 10 years older than 14 years ago. What incentives does the next generation need to get involved in forestland ownership? The second issue is family forestlands as the support for the forest sector as a renewable economic base, vital to getting us to 2050. The third issue is OSWA reviewing and revising its regulatory approach; attract voluntary goodwill rather than impose values. This comes down to the urban/rural divide. The fourth issue is addressing the political issues of commercial forest management on federal lands. Our survival is linked to federal lands. Their fire management and commercial activity has both positive and

negative impacts on family forestland owners. The fifth issue builds on what came out of the symposium and common fun. There are different ways of engaging people, including casual field trips to view various woodland ownerships and letting people know what they're all about.

Bill Arsenault wanted to talk a little about fire liability costs vs. fire suppression costs liability. He explained that even if you're non-negligent and have a fire on your property, you may be responsible for the suppression costs, in total. Some of that can be mitigated by being a member of, or paying into a fire protection district, but you can still be liable for up to \$300,000 of extra costs, such as when they call in outside help. If you are negligent, you are responsible for 100% of the suppression costs. The subject became urgent when the emergency fire costs committee tried to kick that \$300,000 non-negligent liability up to \$500,000 to cover the deficits that are occurring. The topic got tabled for the moment because OSWA wanted to study it more, and possibly come up with some alternatives. Many forestland owners are unaware of this liability at all. The department, together with several outside organizations, has published a brochure outlining landowner fire liability and what their responsibilities are.

Private Forests Program and the Symposium

Peter spoke to the committee about the Private Forests Programs and its accomplishments and goals

- We lead the state in developing new areas to help private forestry be successful, but we should be doing better. We are working on biomass utilization, carbon credits, ecosystems services, and certification.
- We provide value through provision of services, such as: traditional management planning, cost share administration, education and assistance, and incentive programs.
- We maintain a social license by ensuring effective and efficient forest practices. We have administered the Forest Practices Act in an efficient, fair and consistent manner, however, it's no longer sufficient. We won't be able to keep forestlands successful just by resting on our past efforts.

Peter went on to detail the changes in federal funding, which includes an increased emphasis on fire, but a decrease in funding for traditional state and private forestry, There are improvements in federal accountability. There has been some stabilization in state funding, which partially offset previous state budget cuts.

The discussion turned to regulatory challenges. We want to move away from one-size-fits-all regulations. The FPA was a good start, giving us baseline level regulations, but it is a one-size-fits-all approach. We need to encourage voluntary methods with incentives, and increase flexibility in our regulations.

Peter listed the five main issues and potential solutions identified at the symposium.

- Compensation for ecosystems services and other societal benefits. Develop financial incentives, cost share programs, etc. for maintaining and enhancing environmental values and services. Develop and increase access to the market for carbon sequestration. Enact hold harmless agreements protecting landowners from trespass liability lawsuits. Create a green credit forest fund to pay for conservation easement on family forestlands.
- Take advantage of opportunities presented by attempts to minimize impacts of global climate change.
- Address the conflict of values over forestland management and reach out to the wider community.
- Improve delivery of stewardship information to family forestland owners.
- Expand the market for locally harvested products.

Peter has begun discussions with Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and ODFW on conservation easements for family forestland owners. BPA would like to move forward with a pilot program to identify family forestland owners. Peter wanted the committee's thoughts on this possible project.

The committee then discussed its interactions with the Board of Forestry and the procedures for reporting to them or submitting opinions. Craig suggested that the CFF should be reporting to the Board three or four times a year to keep the relationship current. Copies of the Board's work plan will be provided to those committee members who don't have them.

Peter handed out a worksheet of the major symposium issues for the committee to review and discuss. The five challenges were listed with proposed solutions. Each solution was discussed to determine which ones were within the department's purview. There were some solutions that the department has no control over. If it was decided that the department did have purview, tasks and approaches were then discussed. Gary suggested that the CFF provide input to the Board of Forestry's Federal Forest Advisory Committee and, perhaps, the Forest Trust Land Advisory Committee, since management of the federal lands impacts a large portion of Oregon family forestlands.

Future Meetings

Meetings for the next six months were scheduled. They will be the fourth Thursday of each month: 2/28, 3/27, 4/24, 5/22, 6/26. This will mesh well with the BOF meeting schedule, and provide quick response time on issues. Craig suggested a forward agenda, and that the CFF have around 10 agenda items/topics ready for the future meetings. It was also suggested that the committee should hold at least one meeting each year on someone's tree farm.

2007 Storm

Peter finished the meeting with a presentation on the 2007 storm and its impacts on northwestern Oregon.