

## **Elliott State Forest September 2005 Public Comments Summary** **December 5<sup>th</sup> 2005**

This document summarizes comments received during the public comment period, which took place September 15<sup>th</sup> to October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2005, pertaining to the August 2005 Draft Elliott State Forest Management Plan. Comments were received by mail, e-mail or provided in person at two public meetings in September (Coos Bay and Roseburg). This is a synopsis of the comments within the scope of the draft plan. Many comments outside the scope of the draft plan were not included here. All comments received and how they were categorized can be found in the Public Comments Matrix (an Access report).

The comments covered all three sectors of resource management; economic, environmental and social. The following paragraphs will provide a more detailed outline of the comments received for each sector.

First of all, many comments were in regards to concerns about how the economic role influenced the management of the Forest. People voiced these apprehensions: the Forest not utilizing its potential to attain maximum revenue, success of selling future large timber products, maintaining local jobs, selling the Forest, high level of harvesting of advanced structure, assurance there are enough resources for adaptive management and accomplishment to meet legal mandates for revenue.

Also, the public made several suggestions: sell the Forest to maximize revenue, increase harvest levels, decrease harvest levels, add a discussion as to Tillamook County v. State, 302 Or.404(1986) and Tillamook County et al. v. State of Oregon et al (Tillamook Co. Case No. 04 2118) in the legal mandate section and manage advanced structure for timber production only. Additionally, there were some questions regarding the reasons not to practice intensive management: why not harvest sooner and why the 1995 harvest level is not maintained?

Subsequently, there were numerous statements concerning environmental visions, values or principles. Expressed environmental visions in regards to the plan included; too many acres in conservation areas, opposition against clearcutting and using herbicides, not enough acres in advanced structure, managing the forest for forest health not for wildlife, no evidence that plantations will develop into habitat, early seral stages are not necessary on the Forest since there is enough provided by surrounding private lands and creation of islands in the forest cannot save habitat/forest.

The comments concerning values or principles were the following: reduce the amount of advance structure to 30-40%, limit salvage in conservation areas, do not allow any activities in conservation areas, too much loss of marbled murrelet habitat allowed, survey all potential habitat for marbled murrelet, keep commitment on number of owls from 1995 plan, do not depend on BLM LSRs since they might be eliminated, concerns about adequate protection for owls and barred owl moving in, do not develop rock pits, consider big game forage, do not think structure based management will work, place equal value on communities and wildlife, manage under Forest Practices Act, thin plantations instead of more clearcutting, maintain flexibility to adapt.

Other environmental concerns consist of occurrence of adaptive management and monitoring, cumulative impacts of forest management on aquatic and riparian habitat, possible inadequate

protection of aquatic and riparian habitat, landslides due to harvesting, unnecessary salvage of green trees and disturbed sites, killing bears that may damage trees and support restoration not increased harvest.

Also a few environmental questions were raised; why create more structure when there is so much already and why are there only 3 classes of structure instead of 5 like in the Tillamook forest?

Lastly, social topics brought up comprise of these comments: constructing hiking and interpretive trails, supporting off-road driving, selling/trading Winchester Bay tract to Umpqua Lighthouse State Park, monitoring when and where special forest products are harvested to avoid wildlife conflict, managing ATV use to avoid wildlife conflicts.

In conclusion, the comments provided represented an extensive view of issues pertaining to managing the diverse Elliott State Forest and their range varied from positive, negative to neutral. Furthermore, some comments lead to minor changes in the document. The Oregon Department of Forestry is thankful for all input. Considering the numerous responses from the public, this was a successful public comment period.