

Guidance to Reviewers and Specific Review Questions



"STEWARDSHIP IN FORESTRY"

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MEMORANDUM

Date: October 16, 2003

To:

From: Jim Young (Coos Bay District Forester/Project Leader)

Subject: Scientific review of the forest management strategies for the Elliott State Forest

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the scientific review process for the revised Elliott State Forest Management Plan (FMP). You and several other resource specialists will be evaluating the revised FMP and providing comments during November and December of this year. The timeline for the scientific review process necessitates written comments be provided to ODF by December 31st, 2003. The following materials will be mailed to you on October 29th:

- Chapter 2 – Understanding the Forest: Planning and Resources (for contextual reference)
- Chapter 3 – Guiding Principles, Vision, and goals (for contextual reference)
- Chapter 4 – Resource Management Concepts (emphasis for peer review)
- Chapter 5 – Resource Management Strategies (emphasis for peer review)
- Chapter 6 – Implementation (for contextual reference)
- Scientific Review Questions

The revised FMP will present the concepts and strategies for a broad integrated management approach that takes a wide range of forest values into account. Management goals include sustainable timber and revenue, diverse habitats for indigenous species, a landscape level contribution to properly functioning aquatic systems, and diverse recreational opportunities. We are now conducting an independent scientific review of these strategies for forest management. The review is necessary at this point to assess whether implementation of the proposed strategies is likely to result in forest conditions that meet these goals.

The scientific review will focus on Chapter 5 – Resource Management Strategies and how those strategies reflect the Resource Management Concepts as provided in Chapter 4. Chapters 2, 3, and 6 are provided for your reference as context to the overall revision process.

This scientific review is not intended to assess all aspects of the FMP, but focuses on aspects pertinent to the landscape management strategies outlined in the plan. Therefore, some important aspects of the FMP, such as economic and social impacts, are outside the scope of this review. Although the scientific

basis for various management strategies can have profound policy implications, a scientific review such as this one is not designed to evaluate policy. Rather the intent is to investigate the scientific underpinnings of the objectives and strategies set forth in the FMP. This review is intended to meet two primary objectives:

- Provide a credible review of the scientific basis of the landscape management strategies identified in the proposed Forest Management Plan for the Elliott State Forest.
- Assess the feasibility of the proposed strategies achieving the objectives identified in the plan.

Your review will be one piece of information available for ODF to take into consideration as we further develop our management direction. We will consider your review seriously, critically evaluate the validity of your arguments, and consider whether a change in direction is warranted on the basis of those arguments.

You will receive a set of questions to help focus your review. These questions address areas of particular interest to ODF based on issues raised by our ESF-Core Planning Team, as well as on input from the public, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and others. Your answers to these questions will provide an important perspective on areas that were noted as important by a variety of people. However, your review need not be limited in any way by these questions. If, after reading the documents, you identify areas of significant weakness, untenable scientific assumptions, or other areas that warrant comment, please address these concerns in your review. In addition, please indicate if you feel that you are not qualified or have no opinion on any of the questions.

You were invited to participate in this review because of your expertise and scientific background, not to serve as a representative of any particular agency, organization, or institution. The views expressed will be assumed to be your own, based on your scientific understanding, and not those of any organization. Based on your experience you may be aware of conflicting information concerning a particular issue and your evaluation of the merits of different perspectives would be particularly valuable.

In some cases, there are few data available to answer some of the questions. In many cases, the best available information is the professional judgement of leading experts in the field. Your opinion is valued. In these cases, please identify to what extent your judgement is based on data. Each reviewer brings a diversity of experience and expertise to the review. You are asked to consider the questions using the breadth of knowledge available to you concerning the ecology and management of forests and the species that inhabit them.

For the final review document a summary and synthesis of the responses of the individual reviewers will be prepared. Your original comments and responses also will be included in the final document without editing. This will allow readers to examine your original review. Your resume will be included in the final document to enable readers of the review to understand the level and area of expertise of the reviewers.

You are not obligated to any follow up work or presentations related to your review. However, other sections of the plan will be up for review at a later date and you may be asked of your interest to participate in an additional review.

Please return your comments no later than December 31, 2003. It is important that reviews are received in a timely fashion so ODF can reconcile them within the timeline of the FMP planning process. Please send your reviews and direct any questions to:

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63612 Fifth Road
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Please send a hard copy and electronic version (email will be fine) of your review comments as well as a brief (<3 pages) resume.

Thank you very much for your help in this review.