

Agenda Item No.:	7
Work Plan Title & #:	Forestry Program for Oregon Implementation – Issue 1
Objective # & Title:	Objective 5 – Periodic Issue Scan
Date of Presentation:	January 9, 2008
Contact Information:	Clark Seely, Associate State Forester, 503-945-7203 cseely@odf.state.or.us Dan Postrel, Agency Affairs Program Director, 503-945-7420 dpostrel@odf.state.or.us

SUMMARY

The Board's 2007 Issue Scan has been completed, including review of comments received and preparation of recommendations by a Board-appointed work group. Staff also has reviewed the comments and has prepared responses to them. This report transmits the work group and staff recommendations for Board consideration.

CONTEXT

The Board's decision system, adopted in late 2004, provides for periodic issue scans to assist in identifying priorities and planning work. The first scan was completed in 2005. The Board's issue scan procedures call for Board appointment of a work group to review the comments and make recommendations. The Board appointed the 2007 issue scan work group at its April 2007 meeting.

Procedures also state that the Board will receive the full set of unfiltered issue scan comments. In addition to staff and work group recommendations, this report contains the issue scan comments themselves, as well as staff analysis and a brief response to each comment.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Attachment 1 to this report provides an overview of the comments received and the recommendations of the work group. In all, 167 individual comments or suggestions were received from approximately 90 submitters, covering a broad range of subjects.

The work group and staff concurred that the issue scan input did not indicate a need for additional Board work plans. A key theme in the work group's discussion was that the Board already has a large workload, and should evaluate and prioritize its current work before taking on new tasks. To assist the Board in focusing its work, the group identified a set of "standout issues," as well as some general recommendations.

It was also recognized that the Board's work plans are closely tied to the Department's capacity to provide necessary support.

Consistent with its finding that the Board should evaluate and prioritize its current work plans before accepting new tasks – and given Board membership turnover and the continuing evolution of Board decision system – the work group recommended the Board conduct a planning workshop early in 2008.

Staff suggests that a planning session could also provide an opportunity to better coordinate the issue scan and Board work plans with the periodic development of a new *Forestry Program for Oregon*, and with the agency's own strategic planning process.

Another key theme from the issue scan involves a “complex” of issues including rapid forestland ownership change, conversion and fragmentation of forestland, and reduced forestland base and productivity. The work group assigned very high priority to this set of issues. These concerns are closely inter-related, and many potential responses have emerged from the work of the 2007 Family Forestlands Symposium and the Forest Resource Trust Advisory Committee, as included in the issue scan.

Other themes to emerge from the issue scan included:

- A relatively large number of submissions, 45 of the total, related to pesticide use. Many of these expressed concern about pesticide effects and called for additional attention to monitoring. The work group and staff agreed in a recommendation that the Board call for a third-party review of literature related to potential non-target effects of forest pesticides used in Oregon. It was suggested during work group discussions that this review could use the principles of systematic evidence review, and that it could be conducted jointly with other state agencies, consistent with direction from the Governor that agencies work together on pesticide issues during the 2007-09 interim.
- Several comments expressing frustration with federal lands issues, and calling for an accelerated effort to address them.

RECOMMENDATION

The Department recommends that the Board of Forestry:

- Conduct a planning workshop as soon as is practical to review and prioritize its current work and work plans, to address the issue scan work group's other findings, and to improve coordination of Board and Department planning processes.
- Direct a third-party review of literature related to non-target effects of forest pesticides.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will work with the Board to arrange a planning workshop, and will develop options for the pesticide literature review.

ATTACHMENTS

- (1) Issue Scan Overview, including work group recommendations
- (2) List of Subject Areas covered by issue scan input, and work group membership list
- (3) Staff Comparison of 2007 Family Forestland Symposium recommendations with objectives of current Board work plans
- (4) High-level Staff Analysis of elements of Board work plans relating to climate change
- (5) Index of Comments by submitter
- (6) Staff Analysis and Response to submitted comments
- (7) Full Set of submitted comments