Forest Practices Field Audits

presented to Washington State Forest Practices Board

by Leonard Young, Forest Practices Division Manager
Washington State Department of Natural Resources

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Purpose

- To evaluate delivery of the Forest Practices program at the region level, leading to improved consistency where needed.

Goals (Cycle 1)

- <u>Operations</u>.--determine whether the region is properly implementing key aspects of the Forest Practices (FP) Act and Rules, following the rules, guidance provided in the FP Board Manual, and written guidance provided by FPD.

- complete (2006)*

Goals (Cycle 2)

- <u>External Relations</u>.--evaluate the quality of the region's communications and working relationships with the regulated community, sister agencies, local governments, Indian Tribes, and stakeholder organizations.

- preparing to implement (2008)

Goals (Cycle 3)

- <u>Program Leadership within the Region</u>.--evaluate priority setting, decision making, problem solving, delegation of authority, coaching, and other leadership characteristics of the Region Manager, the Assistant Region Manager for Resource Protection and Services (RP&S Assistant), and the FP District.

- pending (2009)

Goals (Cycle 4)

- <u>Forest Practices Division Support</u>.-- determine whether the region has the programmatic guidance, personnel, equipment, ability to travel, and ability to train and develop personnel that it needs to successfully deliver the program.

- pending (2010)

Key Questions – Cycle 1

- O1. Are Forest Practices Applications (FPAs) complete when approved?

- O2. Are FPAs being correctly classified?

- O3. Are pre-approval site visits carried out when the need for such a visit is suggested by the FPA?

- O4. Are interdisciplinary teams (ID Teams) operated according to established procedures?

- O5. Is confidentiality of sensitive data maintained during application processing?

- O6. Are applications conditioned as needed to safeguard public resources?

Key Questions – Cycle 1

- O7. Are applications processed in a timely manner?

- O8. Are leave areas being documented?

- O9. Are post-approval site visits carried out to ensure compliance?

- O10. How is compliance effort being allocated among FPAs and operators?

- O11. Are informal conferences, notices to comply (NTCs), and stop work orders (SWOs) being used appropriately to achieve compliance?

- O12. Is appropriate, timely enforcement action taken when public resources are damaged during the course of an FPA?

Key Questions – Cycle 1

- O13. Are application processing, compliance, and enforcement decisions made equitably and consistently among the region FP staff, and for different applicants?

- O14. Are there any FP Rules that the region staff is not attempting to enforce?

- O15. Are reforestation checks being done?

- O16. Are required meetings between landowners and Indian Tribes verified and documented?

- O17. Are perennial initiation points (PIPs) being identified on the ground?

- O18. Is work scheduled in road maintenance and abandonment plans (RMAPs) in an even-flow manner?

Approach & Metrics

- O1. Are Forest Practices Applications (FPAs) complete when approved?

Approach & Metrics

- O1. <u>Approach</u>: Using the Forest Practices Application Review System (FPARS), FPD will randomly select a sample of 20 FPAs (15 Class III, 5 Class IV-Special) approved during calendar year 2005. The FPA numbers will be given to the region FP Coordinator when the audit team arrives in the region, and the FPA files will be pulled for inspection. Two audit team members (FPD Region Support Specialist, FP Coordinator) will independently examine each FPA, share their opinions, and determine whether the FPA was complete when approved. This determination is a judgment call by the audit team.

- O1. <u>Metrics</u>: Numbers of complete and incomplete FPAs.

Approach & Metrics

- O10. How is compliance effort being allocated among FPAs and operators?

Approach & Metrics

- O10. <u>Approach</u>: Two audit team members (FPD ADM for Operations, FP DM) will interview the RP&S Assistant, the FP DM, the FP Coordinator, and each FP forester. They will ask each person they interview: *What is the region's system for allocating compliance effort among FPAs and operators, and ensuring accomplishment of the region's compliance deliverables? Could this system be improved? If so, how?*

- O10. <u>Metrics</u>: documented interview responses.

Audit Team

- FPD ADM for Operations (team leader)
- an FPD Region Support Specialist not assigned to the region being audited
- an FP DM from another region
- an FP Coordinator from another region.

Implementation

- pre-audit conference call: FP DM & audit team
- audit team entry meeting w/ RM, ARM (RP&S), and FP staff
- data collection & analysis / interviews
- exit meeting
- draft report
- FP DM & ADM (Operations) discuss draft report w/ RM and ARM (RP&S)
- region review and comment on draft report
- final report produced
- final report transmitted to region w/ cover letter from FP DM

Cycle 1 - Status

- 2 / 6 final report transmitted to RM, response underway
- 3 / 6 final report completed, but not yet transmitted to RM
- 1 / 6 draft report completed, but not yet discussed with RM and ARM (RP&S)
- draft audit findings discussed w/ entire FP staff as part of March 2007 training

Cycle 1 - Findings

- need to finalize 6th cycle 1 report, then synthesize findings
- report to FPB at May 2008 meeting
  - findings
  - responses

Cycle 1 - Findings

+ timeliness

+ scope

+ ID teams

+ PIPs

– documentation

– classification

– completeness

Cycle 2 - Status

- draft work plan produced and discussed w/ RMs
- revising work plan
- intend to implement late spring 2008