

Washington State Department of Natural Resources Adaptive Management Program

Quarterly Staff Updates to the Forest Practices Board



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Adaptive Management Team



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Summary

The **Cooperative Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Committee (CMER)** held regular monthly meetings this quarter. The committee approved or advanced to TFW Policy the following Adaptive Management Program (AMP) project deliverables:

- Approval of addenda to both Hard Rock Phase II and Soft Rock studies. TFW Policy received both addenda in February 2022 as additional information to the finding packages that were delivered to TFW Policy in January 2022.
- Approval of project implementation plan for Hard Rock Phase III study: Type N Experimental Buffer Treatment Project in Hard Rock Lithologies Amphibian Monitoring Phase III.
- The Independent Scientific Peer Review (ISPR) process completed the review of the study design for the Riparian Characteristics and Shade Response (RCS) experimental research study. CMER approved the RCS study design at their March 2022 meeting.
- CMER also requested TFW Policy to clarify whether an RSAG add-on proposal to the RCS study is an AMP priority. TFW Policy is expected to provide an answer to CMER at their May 2022 meeting.
- CMER is currently reviewing the final exploratory report for Westside Type F Riparian Prescriptions Effectiveness project.

CMER has one outstanding **dispute** over Smart Buffer Study Design. This dispute is in stage 2 awaiting technical arbitration. The Board approved dispute resolution funds for both CMER and TFW Policy at their February 2022 meeting. The CMER technical arbitration contract is now negotiated with the University of Washington. The contract is awaiting signature by the parties. Technical arbitration is expected to begin in May 2022.

Two new staff joined the program this quarter. **Tanner Williamson** will serve as CMER wetlands scientist and will lead science efforts for the wetlands projects. **Natalie Church** joined the program as administrative assistant. Natalie provides administrative support to TFW Policy, CMER, and projects.

AMP Project Managers



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Project Updates

The **Road Prescription Scale Effectiveness Monitoring Project** examines high-traffic, near-stream forest logging roads as sources of sediment and seeks to better understand mitigating best management practices. The project is in its third year of data collection, with the main experiment and many sub-projects actively implementing. One such project, The Ditch Line Hydraulics Parameterization Experiment, is about to begin the second year of the study in May 2022. Other actively implementing sub-projects this quarter include the Short Time Scale Parameterization Experiment and the Micro-Topography Parameterization Experiment. The project team continues to review and analyze data from the main experiment such as plot discharge, rainfall, traffic counter and sediment particle size data. The Biennial Report has been completed and presented to CMER with preliminary results from the 2019-2021 biennium. The project remains a challenging study to manage due in part to the complex nature of the study design and the need for ongoing and unforeseen levels of maintenance required for approximately 80 field data collection stations in Southwest Washington.

The **Eastside Type N Riparian Effectiveness Project (ENREP)** will help inform if, and to what extent, the prescriptions found in the Type N Riparian Prescriptions Rule Group are effective in protecting water quality and some riparian functions, particularly as they apply to sediment and stream temperature in eastern Washington. The project is currently in full implementation in the original four basin site-pairs, and has added one additional site-pair near Mt. Spokane to increase sample size and strengthen the study. Completion of second year pre-harvest data collection at the Springdale, Blue Grouse, and Tripps basins, and first year pre-harvest data collection at the Fish Creek and Coxit basins for: biophysical variables, including streamflow, wetted channel extent, suspended sediment concentrations, stream shade, riparian forest mensuration, large wood, temperature, and stream cross sections, aquatic life (benthic macroinvertebrates), and habitat. Springdale basin harvest was completed spring 2021. Harvests were completed at the Tripps basin in November 2021 and at the Blue Grouse basin in February 2022.

The **Eastside Timber Habitat Evaluation Types (ETHEP)** project is to develop an ecologically meaningful and reliable framework for applying riparian harvest rules along Type S and Type F streams in eastern Washington. The Scoping Document was approved by SAGE and CMER, and TFW Policy Committee selected a preferred alternative. This quarter the AMP team is working to hire a contractor to complete the Study Design, with the support of the Project Team.

The **Westside Type F Riparian Prescription Effectiveness Project** is expecting to evaluate the effectiveness of Westside riparian prescriptions for F and S streams in achieving resource objectives and performance targets. This quarter, the exploratory report was reviewed at RSAG and submitted to CMER for review and approval. This pilot study is intended to be used to develop a Study Design for a more rigorous test of the effectiveness of the Type F (fish bearing stream) rule buffers. The final report is expected to be presented to Policy in summer of 2022. The Project Team has begun answering the 6 questions document and will begin work on the BACI study development.

The **Riparian Characteristics and Shade (RCS)** project will be a field research project intended to evaluate the combined effect of stream-adjacent no-harvest zone width and adjacent-stand harvest intensity (i.e., thinning density) on stream shade. The Study Design was approved by ISPR in January 2022 and approved by CMER in March 2022. This quarter, RSAG proposed options for pursuing a related study or add-on to this study to look at additional treatments and potential paths forward. Policy will determine whether the add-on is an AMP priority.

CMER Co-Chairs



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The **Unstable Slopes Criteria** project will evaluate the degree to which the landforms described in the unstable slopes rules identify potentially unstable areas with a high probability of impacting public resources and public safety. This quarter, the Project Team is working on Project 2, **Object-Based Landform Mapping with High-Resolution Topography Study** report. The report has been delayed due to a recent vacancy. The report will go to UPSAG for review in April of 2022 and CMER review in May 2022. The contractor and Project Team will be submitting the **Empirical Evaluation of Shallow Landslide Susceptibility and Frequency by Landform (Project 3)** and the **Empirical Evaluation of Shallow Landslide Runout (Project 4)** Study Design for UPSAG, ISPR, and CMER review/approval in the spring/summer of 2022.

The **Deep-Seated Landslide Research Strategy** utilizes the results of the literature reviews for forest harvest effects on glacial and bedrock deep-seated landslides to address key knowledge gaps identified during the literature reviews and to address questions from the Forest Practices Board and Policy regarding the potential effects of forest practices on deep-seated landslides. UPSAG is currently delayed in developing a Study Design based on the Policy-approved Scoping Document for the **Landslide Mapping and Classification Project** (4.5 and 4.6) under the **Deep-Seated Landslide Research Strategy**. The Study Design was anticipated to be provided to CMER for review in spring of 2022. UPSAG decided that they need to take a different approach with the DSL Study Design. UPSAG will present to CMER as soon as there is clarity on the path ahead. Through the development of 4.5 and 4.6, tools will be developed that will inform Project 4.7, GIS Toolkit Development.

The **Water Temperature and Amphibian Use in Type Np Waters with Discontinuous Surface Flow** study will inform the Overall Performance Goals to meet water quality standards and support the long-term viability of covered species by evaluating the influence of intermittent stream reaches on water temperature and FP-designated amphibian use. This project is on pause until fall 2022 when Landscape and Wildlife Science Advisory Group (LWAG) will begin the project scoping. A draft scoping document is anticipated to be delivered to CMER in November 2022. Further work on this study (beyond scoping) is scheduled to begin in FY25.

The **Type N Experimental Buffer Treatment Project in Hard Rock Lithologies Amphibian Monitoring Phase III** project will collect additional data for stream-associated amphibians and other relevant covariate data (e.g., stream temperature data) to evaluate continued trends in amphibian densities. This quarter, the project's charter document was in Dispute Resolution Phase I with TFW Policy in spring 2022, but the issues were resolved at the informal stage. Amphibian demographic monitoring will begin summer 2022 and will continue through summer 2023.

The **Forested Wetlands Effectiveness Project (FWEP)** projects will look at the effectiveness of forest practices prescriptions to protect, maintain, and restore aquatic resources, namely water quality and wetland hydrologic and ecological functions. It will be evaluated to determine if they achieve the FPHCP goal of no-net-loss of functions of those wetlands by half of a timber rotation cycle while meeting water quality standards (FPHCP). FWEP has an approved Study Design. This quarter, Tanner Williamson, CMER Wetland Scientist, along with the Project Team are currently working on developing Site Selection and Data Collection Plan. Site selection verification will begin in May 2022 and the project will begin implementation summer 2022.

The **Wetland Management Zone Effectiveness Monitoring Study** will evaluate wetland functions to determine if the target of no-net-loss of hydrologic function, CWA assurance targets, and hydrologic connectivity are being achieved. The WMZ project charter was approved by WetSAG and CMER in April 2022. Funding for the WMZ begins in FY26, with implementation funding slated to begin in FY28. The initial scoping will begin in FY23. Funding to assist in this work was moved out 3 years on the MPS August 2020 (funding begins FY26) due to the AMP budget limitations.

The **Water Typing Strategy** projects are intended to determine possibility/advisability of combining the 'Physicals', 'PHB', and/or 'LiDAR Model' studies. This quarter, the project team developed a Study Design to assess **Potential Habitat Breaks (PHB)**. The Study Design is currently in concurrent CMER/ISAG review, and the Project Team is addressing reviewer comments. The Project Team will then begin working on the Study Design that will allow an assessment of the **Default Physical Criteria (DPC)**. A statistical consulting firm is assisting the Project Team in evaluating methods for the PHB and DPC Study Designs. Once these two projects are complete, the results would then be used in the development of a study to try and create an effective LiDAR-based water typing model.

The **Eastside Forest Health Strategy** workgroup developed a report this quarter that was reviewed by CMER in April 2022. The Eastside Forest Health Strategy workgroup recommends the development of a research and monitoring strategy investigating active RMZ management approaches that build on current RMZ prescriptions and are designed to balance disturbance resiliency and resource protection objectives outlined in the FP HCP (Schedule L-1 functional objectives and performance targets, Appendix N). This group will continue to meet.

University of Washington Pack Forest Field Trip



April 8, 2022

The Riparian Scientific Advisory Group (RSAG) is planning on having quarterly field trips in the future. Over the past twenty years, we have had a field trip about every five years: two of the Hardwood Conversion, one of the Extensive Monitoring Model Testing, and one of the Type N Hard Rock Study. We are increasing the frequency of this practice because a number of RSAG participants recognize the value of being in the forest, seeing the complexity and uniqueness on the ground while contemplating the impacts of forest practices activities on the ecosystems. We also value sharing the experience with our colleagues who bring their own perspectives, experiences, and knowledge to the conversation. We are planning field trips in conjunction with our regularly scheduled meetings to accommodate the schedules of the participants who have already blocked the time for RSAG. Anyone associated with the Adaptive Management Program (AMP) is welcome and encouraged to participate. Some field trips may be repeated to accommodate those who were not able to attend the first visit to any field site.

The RSAG group met at University of Washington Pack Forest on March 10, 2022. Doug and Judy Martin, Jenelle Black, Jenny Knoth, Chase Beyer, and Joe Murray attended. Chase is the Pack Forest forester and he gave us a tour of the Desired Future Condition (DFC) Demonstration Site that includes a demonstration of the small forest landowner's 25-foot stream buffer site. The DFC treatment was harvested in 2002 and the small forest landowner treatment was cut shortly after. DFC option I, thin from below and option II, leave trees closest to the water, were installed next to each other along the stream (see handout). The stand is a mixture of Douglas fir, western red cedar and alder. The current age of the dominant riparian forest stand is about 100 years old with tree heights up to 167 feet tall. There is an understory developing. Harvesting activities have occurred in the stands adjacent to the DFC Demonstration site since 2002, we observed very little blow down in the areas we visited. All present agreed that we could learn more about stand response to the prescriptions by cruising the riparian forest now after twenty years and compare the results to the DFC model output from 2002. All agreed that field trips are a valuable opportunity to discuss forest practices research options. For example, the need for a retrospective study of harvested sites implemented early in FFR and that extensive monitoring would provide context for understanding stand structure of study sites compare to that across the landscape.

Planned field trips will be posted in the CMER/SAG monthly update. In addition to the DFC Demonstration, RSAG members have expressed interest in visiting a Smart Buffer treatment site, and a possible return to the Type N Hard Rock site in the Willipa Hills. Please contact Joe Murray or Jenny Knoth if you have any questions, suggested locations and subjects or would like to participate in a field trip.

Staff Introductions



We would like to introduce Natalie Church, she started at the Adaptive Management Program in February 2022. She has a background in healthcare and welfare, she is currently going to school to get her Bachelor's degree at Southern New Hampshire University. She started a small crocheting business last year. She and her husband have a house full of rescued animals and enjoys going on adventures with all of them. She is looking forward to the opportunity to be part of the AMP team and to continue to learn and grow within DNR.

AMP Vacancies:

The Eastern Washington CMER Program Scientist position is currently vacant. Recruitment efforts are near completion. We expect to fill this position by June 2022.

Upcoming Events

May 3, 2022 UPSAG Monthly Meeting
May 4, 2022 LWAG Monthly Meeting
May 4, 2022 Roads Project Team Bi-Monthly Meeting
May 5, 2022 TFW Policy Monthly Meeting
May 9, 2022 WetSAG Monthly Meeting
May 9, 2022 FWEP Team Meeting
May 9, 2022 ENREP Team Meeting
May 10, 2022 SAGE Monthly Meeting
May 11, 2022 FP Board Quarterly Meeting
May 12, 2022 TFW Policy Hard Rock Type N Action Development Timeline Dispute
May 13, 2022 RSAG Monthly Meeting
May 17, PHB Subgroup Meeting
May 18, 2022 Standing Dispute Meeting for TFW Policy
May 18, 2022 Roads Project Team Bi-Monthly Meeting
May 23, 2022 FWEP Team Meeting
May 23, 2022 ENREP Team Meeting
May 24, 2022 CMER Monthly Meeting

June 1, 2022 LWAG Monthly Meeting
June 1, 2022 Roads Project Team Bi-Monthly Meeting
June 2, 2022 TFW Policy Monthly Meeting
June 6, 2022 ENREP Team Meeting
June 7, 2022 UPSAG Monthly Meeting
June 8, 2022 RSAG Monthly Meeting
June 13, 2022 WetSAG Monthly Meeting
June 13, 2022 FWEP Team Meeting
June 14, 2022 SAGE Monthly Meeting
June 15, 2022 Roads Project Team Bi-Monthly Meeting
June 15, 2022 Standing Dispute Meeting for TFW Policy
June 20, 2022 Juneteenth (DNR Holiday)
June 21, ISAG Monthly meeting/ PHB Subgroup Meeting
May 18, 2022 Roads Project Team Bi-Monthly Meeting
June 27, 2022 FWEP Team Meeting
June 28, 2022 CMER Monthly Meeting
June 29, 2022 Roads Project Team Bi-Monthly Meeting



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April 22, 2022

TO: Forest Practices Board 

FROM: Tami Miketa, Manager, Small Forest Landowner Office

SUBJECT: Small Forest Landowner Office and Advisory Committee

Small Forest Landowner Advisory Committee

Since my last report, the Small Forest Landowner Advisory Committee held one meeting on April 19, 2022 (via MS Teams). Matt Provencher, DNR Forest Resiliency Division Service Forestry Program Manager, gave a quick update on the new Service Forestry Program. This program will be hiring Service Foresters within each region to provide land management advice to forest landowners and help to assess resource conditions and forest health, identify potential problems and opportunities, determine cost-share eligibility, assist with treatment implementation, and recommend management practices to help achieve objectives. The program educates landowners and assists with development and implementation of management plans to guide current and future management actions.

Three new Small Forest Landowner Regulation Assistance Foresters were introduced to the Committee. These foresters are located in the regions across the state and will consult and provide expert technical assistance to help small forest landowners prepare to conduct forest practices activities on their forestland. They will also help them understand and apply the Forest Practices Rules including small forest landowner alternate plan templates, long-term applications, forest road assessments and construction techniques, timber harvest techniques, and other Forest Practices Rule related issues.

SFLO Program Updates

The SFLO is still growing! We are currently recruiting for a Fish & Wildlife Biologist to assist small forest landowners with water typing of their streams and wetland delineation associated with a Forest Practices Applications and will help them complete Water Type Modification Forms when appropriate.

Recently we said goodbye to Laurie Cox, who after 43 years with DNR recently retired from the Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP). Laurie was an exceptional team leader who was extremely dedicated to the FFFPP and set high standards for herself and encouraged others to work with her to achieve these goals. She single-handedly made the Family Forest Fish Passage Program run smoother and more efficiently and is the reason it is such a successful program today.

The SFLO recently hired Laurie’s replacement, Chris Dwight. Chris has extensive experience in fish passage barrier assessments, prioritization, engineering design, permitting, construction, and post-project compliance inspections and monitoring. He also has extensive experience in administering fish passage and habitat restoration projects to complete large grant funded restoration projects throughout Washington and ensuring quality control throughout the duration of the projects. We welcome Chris to our Team!

Long Term Applications (LTA)

In this Forest Practices Board report, the SFLO regularly shows the status of Long Term Applications. There are currently 307 approved long-term applications, which is a decrease of three approved applications since the end of the last reporting period (01/19/22). This is likely due to three LTA applications being disapproved.

LTA Applications	LTA Phase 1	LTA Phase 2	TOTAL
Under Review	6	0	6
Approved	1	307	308
Disapproved	1	2	3

Upcoming Events

In-person Forest Stewardship Coached Planning – NE WA

Saturdays, 9am – 4pm, May 7th – June 11th at Spokane Community College – Colville Branch.

Online Forest Stewardship Coached Planning – SW WA

Two options: Tuesdays mornings (5/3-6/21) or Wednesday evenings (5/4-6/22)

Online Forest Stewardship Coached Planning – NW WA

Two options: Tuesdays mornings (5/3-6/21) or Wednesday evenings (5/4-6/22)

Bigleaf Maple Syrup Festival

May 14th, 9AM-4PM – Eatonville, WA

Forest Health Workshop

May 20th, 9AM-4PM – Walla Walla, WA

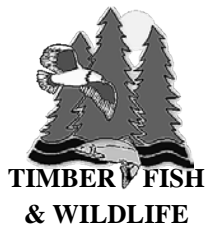
Carbon Opportunities for Forest Owners

Free virtual symposium for property owners starting June 9th

For more information regarding these events, go to <http://forestry.wsu.edu/>

Please contact me at (360) 902-1415 or tami.miketa@dnr.wa.gov if you have questions.

TM/



**Timber, Fish and Wildlife Policy Committee
Forest Practices Board**

PO BOX 47012, Olympia, WA 98504-4712

Policy Co-Chairs:

Marc Engel, Department of Natural Resources

Meghan Tuttle, Weyerhaeuser Company

April 29, 2022

TO: Forest Practices Board
FROM: Marc Engel and Meghan Tuttle
SUBJECT: TFW Policy Committee Report

The Timber, Fish, & Wildlife Policy Committee (Policy) continues to deal with a heavy workload driven by internal process deadlines resulting from management of a dynamic Master Project Schedule, completed CMER studies, resolution of disputes; and priorities directed by the Forest Practices Board. To deal with an increased workload requires Policy to schedule additional meetings, create technical and policy workgroups to address specific issues, and rely heavily on email communications between meetings to meet deadlines.

TFW POLICY COMMITTEE BUSINESS UPDATE for February 2022 – April 2022

Ongoing Work

Type Np Buffer Recommendation Development

The development of the Policy Committee Type Np buffer alternatives continues as part of dispute resolution. Dispute resolution was invoked related to the timeline of the Type Np Technical Workgroup report. Under dispute resolution, Policy is currently reviewing Type Np buffer alternatives to determine an appropriate management response to the findings of the CMER Type N studies. Policy was unable to reach consensus for the Hard Rock Type N Action Development Timeline Dispute Resolution. Stage 2 was invoked in January 2022, the first meeting of Stage 2 was held on the 12th April and Stage 2 is scheduled to be completed by the June 2022.

Completion of Stage 2 of this dispute may result in non-consensus minority/majority alternatives to be presented to the Board resulting in additional needed time for the mediator and the caucuses to prepare reports. It is anticipated Policy recommendations will be completed by September 2022.

Policy members recommend that the Board consider a special meeting in October to receive a Type Np Water workshop and Board discussion before Board action approving a Type Np Water buffer alternative for rule making.

TFW Policy Process to Complete Board Work Plan to Address SAO Recommendations

The Policy Committee has reviewed potential models to address SAO recommendation #5 to develop a net gains model for project planning. At present, Policy is considering net gains models to recommend to the Board and has started discussions regarding recommendation #6 decision criteria for determining actions to the Board. Policy intends to bring forward through the Adaptive Management Program

Administrator (AMPA) the Policy recommendations for a net gains model for project planning and decision criteria for determining actions to the Board in November 2022.

Master Project Schedule and Adaptive Management Program Budget

At the August meeting the Board will need to approve the Master Project Schedule and associated budget in preparation for the FY 2023- 24 biennium. In addition, per the adaptive management program rule in WAC 222-12-045, Policy and the Board are required on every even calendar year to do a status check-in on the progress made to fully implement the Master Project Schedule. Therefore, at the August meeting the Board will:

- Receive from Adaptive Management Program Administrator (AMPA) the Policy recommended Master Project Schedule and associated budget for FY 2023 – 2024 for Board approval; and an
- AMPA report based on Policy review on progress made to implement the Master Project Schedule, and the status of ongoing projects including adherence to scheduled timelines.

With this information the Board will need to approve the MPS and budget; and determine whether the program is in substantial compliance with the MPS; and, if not must notify the National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by letter within thirty days after the regular August meeting.

Small Forest Landowner Request for Smaller Riparian Buffers

Dispute resolution was invoked by WFFA citing the lack of progress by Policy to develop Type F riparian zone buffer width prescriptions based on WFFA’s *Alternate Prescriptions for SFL in western Washington*, proposal. The Policy Committee completed the full dispute resolution process through Stage 2 in April 2021, received the mediators’ final report in May 2021, and has not at the request of WFFA prepared the caucus majority/minority reports to present to the Board.

Policy accepted the request by WFFA for the delay until Policy received the results of the Policy requested CMER review of the WFFA scientific justification. Policy received a response from CMER in December 2021 and has resolved a dispute invoked by WFFA to request further review by CMER in March 2022. Policy agreed for the resolution elements which pertains to the riparian buffer dispute:

- 1) To preserve the CMER position papers within the Policy record. The materials will be available to the Forest Practices Board (FPB) upon request; and,

The two CMER position papers may be used by caucuses at a final meeting of full TFW Policy to discuss completed science reviews relative to the 2015 WFFA Low Impact Alternate Plan Template Proposal Initiation (PI), as well as to inform caucus preparation of minority/majority reports to present to the Board as the final step in the completion of Stage 2 of the Small Forest Landowner Request for Smaller Riparian Buffers dispute.

Policy will discuss the final steps to prepare the minority/majority at their May 2022 meeting.

Proposal Initiation (PI) Request for Inclusion of a Specified Definition of “Relatively Low Impact” Criteria in Board Manual Section 21

The Small Forest Land Owner Caucus invoked dispute resolution in January 2022 based on the lack of consensus for Policy to accept their proposal initiation requesting inclusion of a specified definition of “relatively low impact” criteria in board manual 21 *Guidelines for Alternate Plans*.

Policy initiated Stage 1 for this dispute process at their February 2022 meeting and a final Stage 1 meeting will occur at the May 2022 Policy meeting. Policy is seeking resolution through: discussion of the criteria requirement in WAC 222-12-0403(5); review of the existing guidance in Board Manual Section 21; WFFA requested discussion about their interpretation of a Legislative regulatory mitigation standard to only be applied to small forest landowner alternate harvests; and, a Policy review of the requested definition of “relatively low impact” for inclusion in Board Manual Section 21.

Completed Work

Type N Experimental Buffer Treatment in Hard Rock Lithologies Phase II Study

Policy received the final report in January 2022 and at their February meeting approved, by consensus, the recommendation that action be taken as part of the ongoing TFW policy deliberation on Np buffer recommendations to the Forest Practices Board.

Type N Experimental Buffer Treatment in Soft Rock Lithologies Study

Policy received the final report in January 2022 and at their February meeting approved, by consensus, the recommendation that action be taken as part of the ongoing TFW policy deliberation on Np buffer recommendations to the Forest Practices Board.

Master Project Schedule and Adaptive Management Program Budget

The Board approved the FY 2021 – 2022 Master Project Schedule (MPS) and budget at the August 2020 meeting. At each May meeting the Board reviews the MPS and approves an amended budget for the next fiscal year beginning on 1st July after the Board meeting.

For the FY 2023 fiscal year, the Policy Committee formed a budget workgroup to review the updated CMER work plan, and the status of the Master Project Schedule and the Adaptive Management Program Budget.

The Policy Committee, at a special budget meeting on April 15, 2022, accepted minor amendments to the Board approved MPS and an associated budget for FY 2023 to recommend for Board approval at the May meeting.

Proposal Initiation (PI) Request for Type Np Buffer Basin GIS/FPA Project

The Policy Committee, at their May 2021 meeting, rejected a request to initiate a Type Np Buffer Basin GIS project. Dispute resolution was then invoked by the Industrial landowners’ caucus based upon the non-consensus vote by Policy.

On March 29, 2022 the dispute over PI for Type Np Buffer Basin GIS/FPA Project was concluded in Stage 2, with the industrial landowner caucus withdrawing the PI and dispute with the concurrence of other disputing parties

Hard Rock (Phase 3) Study Design Charter

The Policy Committee, at their November 2021 meeting, did not reach consensus to approve the Hard Rock (Phase 3) Study Design Charter. Dispute resolution was invoked by the Industrial landowners’ caucus, after the non-consensus vote by Policy, as they did not think it is proper to terminate work on a project Policy recommended by consensus and the FPB approved to proceed.

This dispute was resolved in Stage 1 in February 2022 when Policy by consensus resolved the dispute by agreeing to:

- 1) Ensure we obtain the best value for money in adaptive management projects by regular review within the Policy budget committee, develop policy manual processes related to contracts and competitive bidding;
- 2) Develop best practices to eliminate or reduce conflict of interest within adaptive management program, recusal process, etc. through possible revisions to BM 22, PSM for CMER and/or AMPA policy
- 3) Address CWA milestones and prioritization in MPS

The Policy Committee has agreed to establish work groups to work with the AMPA to resolve the first two elements and the Department of Ecology has agreed to interact with Policy to understand how the Clean Water Assurances will be incorporated into the MPS and progress tracked.

WFFA Motion for CMER Response Dispute Resolution

The Policy dispute over the WFFA motion for an additional CMER Response to the Policy request for CMER review of the completed outside science review in support of their Small Forest Landowner template PI has been resolved on April 11, 2022 resolved through the following steps:

- 1) Preserve the CMER position papers within the Policy record. The materials will be available to the Forest Practices Board (FPB) upon request;
- 2) The two CMER position papers may be used by caucuses at a final meeting of full TFW Policy to discuss completed science reviews relative to the 2015 WFFA Low Impact Alternate Plan Template Proposal Initiation (PI), as well as to inform caucus preparation of minority / majority reports to the FPB as the final step in the completion of Stage 2 of the WFFA PI dispute; and,
- 3) Recognize that TFW policy is evaluating the PI process to review and use outside science in the program as part of the SAO Audit Net Gains recommendation action.

MAJOR TFW POLICY COMMITTEE TOPICS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2022

Existing Policy Priorities

- **Adaptive Management Program (AMP) budget and the Master Project Schedule (MPS):** Policy will prepare recommendations for the FY2023 – 2024 MPS and budget, and a review on progress made to implement the Master Project Schedule, and the status of ongoing projects including adherence to scheduled timelines to present to the Board at the August 2022 meeting.
- **Type Np Water Riparian Management Zone (RMZ) buffer width recommendations:** It is anticipated that Policy will complete the development of a consensus decision on an alternative to recommend to the Board by September 2022.
- **SAO:** Policy will deliver recommendations for transitioning to a net gains approach, SAO recommendation #5, #6 to the Board at the November 2022 meeting; and Policy will provide options for the AMPA to include in a memo describing different ways that decision criteria could be made part of the AMP process to be delivered to the Board by November 2022;
- **WFPA Headwater Stream Smart Buffer Pilot Project:** The Cooperative Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Committee (CMER) is completing an on-going scientific review of the proposed study design that was provided by WFPA. The review is currently in the deliberation phase at CMER and it is uncertain when CMER will present the results of their review to Policy.

- **Small Forest Landowner Request for Smaller Riparian Buffers:** Completion of stage 1 and 2 of the dispute resolution process to prepare Small Forest Landowner Alternate Plan Template prescriptions will be completed in calendar year 2022.
- **Small Forest Landowner Experimental Harvest Prescription:** Policy has received the workgroup recommendations and plans to of recommendations for the Board until after the Policy recommendations for the Small Forest Landowner Smaller Riparian Buffers are delivered to the Board.
Extensive Riparian Monitoring: Policy is developing a recommended extensive riparian monitoring strategy for inclusion in the MPS in calendar year 2022.

New Projects:

The Policy Committee workload is heavy, yet must also remain sensitive to the changes in various timelines and to new issues as they come up. The capacity for Policy to accept any new work as assigned by the Forest Practices Board or taken on for other reasons could require delaying existing priorities and/or scheduling additional meetings.



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April 25, 2022

MEMORANDUM

To: Forest Practices Board
From: Darric Lowery, WDFW Forest Habitats Section Manager
Subject: Upland Wildlife Update

The following provides a brief status update for ongoing or pending actions pertaining to priority wildlife species in forested habitats:

Marbled Murrelet

1992: Federally listed as Threatened
1993: State listed as Threatened
1996: Federal critical habitat designated
1997: FPB enacted State Forest Practices Rules
2017: State uplisted to Endangered

The species' status has not improved since state listing in 1993. The murrelet population in Washington's marine waters has declined by 4.15% annually (2001-2021) with the strongest annual declines (4.97%; 2001-2020) in the U.S. portion of the Salish Sea; the murrelet is also declining along the Washington coast (-3.29% annually between 2001-2021). As a result of the 2017 state uplisting to endangered status, the Washington Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), in consultation with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), recommended that the Forest Practices Board (Board) support a forest practices rule (FP Rule) assessment including relevant stakeholders. WDFW established a Wildlife Working Group (WWG) to evaluate efficacy of the rules, identify potential rule modifications to improve clarity and implementation, and provide recommendations to the Board. This work continues and the WWG is close to finalizing draft recommendations with the intent to present the recommendations to the Board at the August meeting. The most recent WWG meeting was held on April 13, 2022 with the next WWG meetings set for May 3rd and 17th of 2022.

WDFW continues to monitor Marbled Murrelet populations at-sea in Zone 1 (Puget Sound and Straits; monitored in 2020) and Zone 2 (Washington coast; monitored in 2021) during the nesting season. These are the only data available to assess murrelet abundance and trends. The NW Forest Plan Effectiveness Monitoring team's 25-year report has been published (https://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs/pnw_gtr996.pdf) as well as a report on trends in habitat conditions (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/treearch/pubs/63314>). The 2020 and 2021 at-sea survey reports are now available (Lance & Pearson, 2021; Pearson et al. 2021) and a manuscript on winter trends over an 8-year period was just published that found strong non-breeding season declines in Puget Sound (Pearson et al. 2022).

Canada Lynx

1993: State listed as Threatened

1994: FPB enacted voluntary management approach
2000: Federally listed as Threatened
2017: State uplisted to Endangered

With the 2017 uplisting to state endangered status, it was recommended that no action be taken to include lynx in the forest practices rule designation for critical habitat (state) and to maintain existing voluntary protections. WDFW continues to explore lynx conservation opportunities in collaboration with landowners, Canadian federal and provincial entities, US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), US Forest Service (USFS), conservation organizations, tribes, and academic partners. The goal is to refine recovery actions that can be implemented in the near- and long-term to benefit lynx conservation in Washington.

Evaluation of Forest Practices Applications (FPAs) on private lands continues to identify potential impacts to lynx habitat. Given wildfire impacts in northcentral Washington, WDFW has pursued ongoing coordination with partners to bring awareness of the importance of balancing habitat protection with the need to address fire risk, including on federal lands.

Under DNR's Lynx Habitat Management Plan (2006), DNR and Washington State University (WSU) have begun developing a proposal to investigate the effects of different pre-commercial thinning designs on snowshoe hare use of habitat, vulnerability to predation, and sources of mortality. The information gathered may then be used to better inform forest management treatments favorable for snowshoe hares while also providing increased foraging opportunities for lynx.

Northern Spotted Owl

1988: State listed as Endangered
1990: Federally listed as Threatened
1996: FPB enacted State Forest Practices Rules
2012: USFWS designation of revised critical habitat
2016: State retention of Endangered status

The Northern Spotted Owl population has continued to decline primarily due to ongoing competitive interactions with Barred Owls. The Barred Owl removal experiment in the eastern Cascade Range has been completed. The published results from the experiment, which included study areas in Washington, Oregon, and California, indicated, among other findings, a positive response in survival rates by Spotted Owls following Barred Owl removal.

DNR and WDFW continue working with DNR's consultant to develop a Programmatic Safe Harbor Agreement (SHA) that would be held by DNR. The SHA would provide federal regulatory assurances to landowners through a voluntary program for non-federal landowners regarding forest management of NSO habitat. The intention is to finalize development of the SHA framework, an associated draft Environmental Analysis (EA), and identify an enrollment mechanism for landowners to voluntarily enroll in the SHA. Although the supporting legislation that would allow DNR to hold the SHA did pass this legislative session, developing the above components needs to be completed by June 30, 2022, under current proviso funding.

The USFWS continues working to address Barred Owl management and subsequent conservation of Spotted Owls in Washington, Oregon, and California. WDFW is an active partner in a process to develop management concepts and scenarios that will guide decision making by USFWS about the scope of Barred Owl management options that will be evaluated in an Environmental Impact Statement.

Fisher

1998: State listed as Endangered
2016: Federal status: Final decision for west coast DPS - not warranted for listing (April 2016)
2018: Ruling on 2017 withdrawal of proposed ESA listing, USFWS ordered to revisit that decision
2019: Federal revised proposed rule to list fishers, excluded fisher in Washington

Fisher reintroductions into Washington have been completed by WDFW and cooperating partners, with a total of 260 fishers, including 90 in Olympic National Park (2008-2010), and 170 in other federal lands within the southern and northern Cascade Mountains. Non-federal landowners can continue to voluntarily

enroll in the CCAA and receive federal regulatory assurances if the fisher were to become listed under the ESA in the future. By enrolling in the CCAA, landowners agree to follow basic conservation measures that protect fishers that may use their private lands. To date, 61 landowners representing 3,442,191 acres of non-federal forest lands are enrolled in the CCAA. WDFW is currently developing monitoring options to evaluate re-colonization success.

Western Gray Squirrel

1993: State listed as Threatened
2002: Petitioned for Federal listing
2003: Federal listing denied
2013: FPB enacted voluntary management approach
2016: State retention of Threatened status

A final report has been completed that summarizes the results of the statewide western gray squirrel hair tube survey concluded in 2020. In addition, a report summarizing results of a statewide habitat change assessment is undergoing final edits. Results of these reports will be incorporated into the periodic status review currently underway, which we expect will be available for public review by July 2022.

Future Updates to the Board

The forest practices rules require that when a species is listed by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission and/or the U.S. Secretary of the Interior or Commerce, WDNR will consult with WDFW and makes a recommendation to the Forest Practices Board as to whether protection is needed under the Critical Habitat (State) rule (WAC 222-16-080). WDFW and WDNR coordinate to anticipate federal actions and to respond to changes in the status of species addressed by the rules.

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