

10. Training/Information/Education

10.1 Introduction

Training is a key element to successful implementation of, and compliance with the Forest Practices Rules – some of the most comprehensive and function-based in the nation. Forest Practices Rules require DNR to “conduct a continuing program of orientation and training, relating to forest practices and rules thereof, pursuant to RCW 76.09.250” (WAC 222-08-140). DNR conducts ongoing training to educate internal agency staff, forest landowners and staff from cooperating agencies and organizations on implementation of forest practices rules.

There are four major venues in which the Forest Practices Program provides training:

- Forest Practices Program training
- Subject-based training
- Region staff provided training
- Washington Contract Loggers Association (WCLA) training

The forest practices program and cooperating agencies provided over 400 hours of training to more than 2,900 participants in fiscal year 2013.

10.2 Status of Forest Practices Training Programs

A new training manager was hired early FY 2013 to provide oversight for forest practices specific training for staff, stakeholders, and landowners. Training has continued at a limited scale due to budget constraints. Training included such subjects as unstable slopes, channel migration zones, wetlands, water type-bankfull width, and rule implementation on an as-needed basis.

The training manager will develop a strategy for future trainings in the coming years. The training program places a heavy emphasis on developing new training regarding new rule implementation, improving evaluations of risk to public resources and public safety, and reduction in mass wasting events related to forest practices activities. Results from both field compliance and enforcement visits as part of the daily work of Forest Practices Foresters, and from the Compliance Monitoring Program will help direct a comprehensive training program for DNR staff, landowners, and other stakeholders.

Forest Practices Program Training

Budget constraints have limited the magnitude of programmatic training over the past year. However, a new training (see description below) was developed this year regarding water types and bankfull width. The new training was provided to all field forest practices foresters and some office staff that review and process water type modification forms.

Formal training sessions are provided for complex subjects that require larger blocks of time such as this year’s water types and bankfull width training. Region staff who are trained share the information they learned in the class with landowners and other stakeholders in the following months.

Forest Practices’ staff continues to receive short focused training sessions during scheduled program meetings. These short duration trainings took place this year during regularly scheduled

Operations meetings for forest practices staff. The meetings are held three times a year between division staff and region staff to share information, address program concerns and answer questions. Training topics included documentation and enforcement. After these short duration training opportunities, the participants share the information they learned with other program staff and stakeholders as appropriate.

Formal Training Topics

Enforcement training

Training was provided by the Assistant Attorney's General office and the Forest Practices Division to DNR region staff regarding documentation for enforcement related to appeals. The training included reviewing case preparation and the process for brief adjudicated proceedings (BAP). It also covered preparing and collecting documents for the appeal discovery process. 31 people attended the training.

Water Type - Bankfull Width

Six Water Type - Bankfull Width trainings were provided this year. The target audience included region and division staff involved in water typing or processing water typing forms. The teaching objectives included explanation of: water type determination; WAC 222-16-031; and Board Manual sections 2 and 3; and required information for completion of water type forms. Instructor led field and classroom exercises were used to demonstrate the training objectives. Region staff that was trained will provide the training to stakeholders in the coming months. 91 people attended the training.

Compliance Monitoring

The Compliance Monitoring Program provides annual training for staff from DNR, Ecology, WDFW and tribal field staff that participate in on-site review of completed forest practices applications. A one day classroom session specifically focuses on the protocols used to collect Compliance Monitoring data. Protocols, which are updated periodically to reflect design changes, are reviewed to ensure understanding of procedures and their purpose. Additional field coaching/on-the-job training is done using experienced staff to promote consistency in observations by new program participants. 24 people attended the training.

Information technology

Training for Forest Practices Program staff on information technology applications and web-based tools was provided on an as-needed basis during the 2013 fiscal year. Training included Forest Practices Risk Assessment Tool and hydrography GIS database editing. 9 people attended the training.

Training was provided to DNR RMAP Specialists that covered the core functionality of ArcGIS and editing tools. The training focused on enhancing skills needed to edit and monitor RMAP spatial data from road maintenance and abandonment plans. The data is collected, in part, to assist in tracking landowner fish passage barrier repairs. 13 people attended the training.

Unstable Slope

Two Unstable Slopes trainings were provided this year. The target audience for the class is DNR program staff, agency stakeholders, landowners, and consultants. The objectives of unstable slopes training is to improve the ability to recognize unstable slopes and landforms, improve consistency in recognition of these features, and identify when a specialist is needed for further consultation.

34 people attended the training.

Channel Migration Zone

Four Channel Migration Zone trainings were provided this year. The target audience for the class is DNR program staff, landowners and staff from cooperating agencies. The objectives of channel migration zone training include learning about channel anatomy, identifying significant features such as bankfull channel width, and implementing the channel migration definition per the forest practices rule. The class includes subjects such as understanding flood stage, and lateral channel movement; and aerial photo chronology to determine changes in channel morphology. Delineation of the migration zone also is demonstrated.

64 people attended the training.

Wetland Identification

Three Wetland Identification trainings were provided this year to program staff, landowners and staff from cooperating agencies. Classes consist of identifying wetland vegetation for the specific region in which the training is conducted. Subjects covered in the classroom include wetland hydrology, soils, vegetation, and mitigation. Labs are conducted to teach how to identify soil properties and plant associations. Field exercises cover wetland identification and delineation.

41 people attended the training.

Training by Region Staff

DNR region staff generally delivers both statewide and region-specific training. In addition, each region office holds regular Timber Fish & Wildlife (TFW) “cooperator” meetings for program participants to communicate changes in forest practices rules, rule implementation or application processing. Participants are invited and encouraged to share information and presentations relevant to the natural resource environment. Cooperator meetings are an important mechanism to assure fair and uniform application of requirements for forest practices within DNR’s six regions. Region staff also organizes informal meetings where technical or scientific information is presented to keep field practitioners informed about recent research findings.

Regions completed or sponsored more than 54 training presentations and meetings during fiscal year 2013, reaching about 1300 people. The topics varied widely and included: compliance monitoring results, water type modifications, road maintenance plans and general forest practices rule topics.

Washington Contract Logger Association Training

Agency staff taught select classes offered by Washington Contract Logger Association (WCLA) — two sessions held in Western Washington and one session in eastern Washington. WCLA offers a five-day training course, which includes one day of Forest Practices Rules training for operators seeking WCLA certification. Program staff and staff from other agencies (e.g., WDFW

and Ecology) cover water typing, riparian and wetland management zones, cultural resources, road maintenance, enforcement, and general information regarding the Forest Practices Application/Notification process.

170 WCLA members attended the sessions.