

# 14. Information Technology

## 14.1 Information Technology-Based Tools Update

Information technology-based tools provide significant support for the administration of the Forest Practices Program. These tools include information systems, such as the Forest Practices Application Review System (FPARS) and the Forest Practices Risk Assessment Tool, as well as discrete data sets, such as the DNR Hydrography Geographic Information System (GIS) data layer that forms the basis of the water typing system. Within DNR, the Forest Practices Division works closely with the Information Technology Division to develop and maintain these information technology tools.

### Forest Practices Application Review System

The Forest Practices Application Review System (FPARS) streamlines the processing of Forest Practice Applications and provides the public with the ability to review proposed forest practices activities. It makes use of the internet, document imaging and management technology, interactive geographic information system technology, and the Oracle database system to collect Forest Practices Application/Notification information, and distribute them for regulatory and public review. FPARS also supports risk assessments of proposed forest practices activities, and archiving Forest Practices Applications/Notifications.

Between 7/1/2012 and 6/30/2013, 5,133 FPAs were received or renewed and entered into FPARS. Currently there are 732 reviewers receiving email notification.

Two new data layers were added to the FPARS mapping site. Forest Practices Applicants can use the Tribal Cultural Resources Contacts layer, accessed on the Activity Map and the Base Map, to display the contact information for landowner/tribe meetings regarding potential cultural resources on their activity site. Reviewers can use the Water Type Modification Form (WTMF) PDF layer, accessed on the Water Type Map, to display approved WTMFs.

A new online FPA/N Search tool was implemented on the Forest Practices webpages on September 1, 2012. Unlike the previous search tool, the new search tool does not require a user ID and password to access. The new search tool also allows the user to enter up to ten (10) FPA/N numbers to search for simultaneously.

The online FPA Search Tool is more robust than the previous version and many people have opted to use it instead of registering for email notification. Many long-time users have discontinued receiving email notification in favor of the online search tool. However, because it doesn't require authentication, we don't know how many people are using the online search tool.

### Forest Practices Risk Assessment Tool

The Forest Practices Program continues to support the Forest Practices Risk Assessment Tool. This interactive mapping and reporting tool is available on DNR's web pages. It gives DNR

Forest Practices Program staff, in both the division and the region offices, access to GIS data related to the implementation of the Forest Practices Rules. It allows staff to see the geographic relationships between environmental features, including streams with fish habitat, potential landslide areas, archaeological sites, northern spotted owl habitat, and the locations of proposed forest practice activities. There currently are more than 70 map layers that can be displayed or queried. We continually work to improve the Risk Assessment Tool, adding map layers and functionality to better serve Forest Practice staff.

The most significant map layer update undertaken this year was the addition of the 2012 Statewide Parcel Boundaries. This map layer is the most complete and consistent set of statewide county parcel information available. It provides Forest Practices region staff with parcel boundary, tax identification number, size, and ownership information as they review individual forest practice applications.

### **The DNR Hydrography Data Layer and Water Type Updates**

The Forest Practices GIS section updates DNR's hydrography data layer with water typing information received on Water Type Modification Forms (WTMF). These updates are based on direct observation in the field by DNR personnel, forest landowners, fish survey contractors, and others.

Due to reduced staffing over the last three years, the backlog of approved WTMF not yet entered into DNR's hydrography data layer had grown to around 1,250 by July 2012. To address this issue, in October 2012, we created a project Cartographer 3 position to primarily work on hydrography data updates. By early January 2013, the new cartographer was trained and fully engaged in entering updates to the DNR hydrography data layer. This project position will continue through June 30, 2015.

In April 2013 we hired a second project Cartographer 3. This cartographer focused on entering FPA harvest polygons in FPARS, a much easier task to learn. This allowed two of our expert hydrography data editors to spend more time entering WTMF updates. This project position ended June 30, 2013.

During the reporting year as a whole, DNR GIS staff entered approximately 8,400 updates into the Hydrography data set based on 2,050 Water Type Modification Forms. With the project cartographers in place, between January 1, 2013 and June 30, 2013, we entered approximately 1,200 WTMF, reducing the backlog to around 100. As a result, water type updates are current as of June 30, 2013.