



May 9, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: Forest Practices Program

FROM: Chris Hanlon-Meyer, Division Manager for Forest Practices 

SUBJECT: Review of FPAs with Potential to Affect Unstable Slopes

This memo is to notify you of changes we are making to the form and content of Forest Practices Applications related to unstable slopes, provide general direction to Forest Practices field staff and managers on making use of this new information, and provide specific direction regarding the circumstances in which applicants are required to provide geotechnical reports prepared by a qualified expert.

The concept of including additional information regarding unstable slopes in the FPA was highlighted in recommendations from the TFW Policy Committee to the Forest Practices Board following the *Mass Wasting Effectiveness Monitoring Project*. The Board accepted these recommendations in February, 2014.

Therefore, effective today, an update to the application instructions will include new questions for FPAs that are proposed to take place on or around unstable landforms (enclosed). For all applications where potentially unstable slopes or landforms are within or adjacent to a forest practices activity area (new application questions 11 and 12), completing the Slope Stability Informational Form is a requirement of a complete FPA. This form is intended to gather additional information to help assess whether the FPA proposes activities that may involve potentially unstable slopes or landforms under WAC 222-16-050(1)(d). This form will also aid in determining the appropriate FPA classification.

Division staff in the Operations Section and the Policy and Services Section will be working over the next month to develop more detailed procedural guidance based on input from division and region staff and managers. I anticipate this as a discussion topic at the June FP quarterly program meeting.

The program and the Board are reviewing current scientific knowledge and the application review process around unstable slopes. Until that process is complete and any further actions are identified, I am directing certain circumstances in which we will require a geotechnical report to be supplied by the applicant in order to insure a complete application and provide information for a proper FPA classification decision.

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Based on the information provided on the Slope Stability Informational Form and our existing application screening tools, each application should receive a desk review to identify public safety considerations that are in general proximity to the application area. Primary public safety considerations are developed areas (i.e. homes, businesses, barns, etc.), major public roads, and permanent recreational trails and/or recreational developments. Use data such as aerial photos, maps, and local knowledge; to the extent they are available. FPAs that are in general proximity to public safety concerns should be forwarded to the Forest Practices Science Team. A Science Team Geologist will then evaluate the applicable landforms' potential to deliver sediment or debris to those concerns. Finally, the presence of landforms that may pose, through delivery, a potential threat to public safety will require the applicant to supply a geotechnical report prepared by a qualified expert.

Ultimately, accurate and complete forms help the DNR to properly classify FPAs. I realize that this may impact your ability to achieve your deliverable targets and I am committed to working with you to assess and propose adjustments to your targets.

Please feel free to contact me at (360) 902-1398 or chris.hanlon-meyer@dnr.wa.gov if you have further questions.

CHM/

Attachment