Agency: 490 Department of Natural Resources
Decision Package Code/Title: EE Unstable Landforms
Budget Period: 2009-11
Budget Level: PL - Performance Level

Recommendation Summary Text:
This proposal strengthens the Forest Practices Program’s ability to safeguard public resources, capital improvements of the State, and public safety by ensuring the best possible regulatory decisions are made on proposals from timber landowners to harvest timber and construct roads in areas with potentially unstable landforms. This proposal: 1) upgrades Forest Practices region office staff from clerical to para-professional positions, 2) continues Landslide Hazard Zonation (LHZ) for priority watersheds, 3) doubles support for the Forest Practices Adaptive Management Program (AMP), and 4) adds an additional consulting geologist to the Forest Practices Program.

Fiscal Detail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operating Expenditures</th>
<th>FY 2010</th>
<th>FY 2011</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>001-1 General Fund - Basic Account-State</td>
<td>1,417,600</td>
<td>1,320,100</td>
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<td>Total Cost</td>
<td>1,417,600</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staffing</th>
<th>FY 2010</th>
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<th>Annual Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>FTEs</td>
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Package Description:
The December 2007 storm event in Southwest Washington has called into question DNR’s ability to safeguard public resources, capital improvements of the State, and public safety when processing Forest Practices Applications (FPAs) that involve potentially unstable landforms. The Forest Practices Program needs to strengthen its ability to ensure the best possible regulatory decisions are made on such FPAs. Improvements are needed in 3 areas: 1) stronger staff capability, 2) better information, and 3) greater adaptive management investments to improve our understanding of interactions between forest practices and unstable landforms. This proposal has 4 elements, two that improve staff capability, one that provides better information with which to make decisions, and one that strengthens adaptive management.

Element 1. Forest Practices Region Office Staff $153,400
The Forest Practices Program’s region office staff is its “first line of defense” in reviewing FPAs to determine whether they involve unstable landforms. These staff interact with applicants, evaluate diverse information, and make the initial, critical decisions that determine whether an application is reviewed in the field by Forest Practices foresters and geologists. DNR is completing in-depth reviews of the duties of the region office staff. These reviews indicate the need to transition positions below the Forest Practices Coordinator from clerical to para-professional positions. This proposal element offsets the increased cost of para-professional region office positions.

September 5, 2008
Element 2. Landslide Hazard Zonation $1,087,400
Landslide Hazard Zonation (LHZ) combines existing information with original fieldwork to identify all potentially unstable landforms in a watershed. Vastly improved maps are then created for use by the Forest Practices Program and forest land managers. The purpose is to eliminate any errors or omission in the identification of potentially unstable landforms during both timber harvest layout and FPA processing. It is important to identify potentially unstable landforms at these times so that forest practices are configured so they do not trigger landslides that may damage public resources or capital improvements of the state, or jeopardize public safety. This proposal element continues LHZ in priority watersheds. LHZ is an important element of Washington's landmark Forests & Fish Report (FFR).

Element 3. Adaptive Management $1,200,000
For the past 5 biennia, the Forest Practices Program's base budget has provided $600,000 per year to support scientific projects carried out by the Cooperative Monitoring, Evaluation & Research committee (CMER). Over this time, the Forest Practices Adaptive Management Program (AMP) was implemented following direction provided in FFR, and the volume of work underway has increased significantly. Due in large part to funding limitations, the AMP has not been able to deliver scientific work products according to the schedule anticipated in FFR. In particular, monitoring data crucial to the Department of Ecology's (DOE) upcoming evaluation of the extent to which the Forest Practices Rules are fulfilling federal Clean Water Act (CWA) requirements have not yet been produced. Whether the State continues to receive federal CWA assurances depends on the AMP significantly increasing the pace at which these essential data are produced. Making an investment to accelerate the production of crucial scientific information--and thereby maintaining federal CWA assurances--is extremely cost effective compared to the consequences of losing CWA assurances. This proposal element doubles state support for the AMP from $600,000 per year to $1,200,000 per year. This will expedite projects in CMER's Unstable Slopess Rules Group that are essential to understanding relationships among unstable landforms, forest practices, and water quality.

Element 4. Consulting Geologist $297,700
Forest Practices geologists consult with Forest Practices foresters as needed to evaluate FPAs involving potentially unstable landforms. If a geologist is not available within the application processing timeframe, a forester may be forced to independently interpret a difficult field situation and make critical regulatory decisions without the benefit of expert input. This proposal element adds an additional consulting geologist to the Program, to ensure that Forest Practices foresters always have ready access to the expertise they need to make the best regulatory decisions.

**Narrative Justification and Impact Statement**

**What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?**

Element 1: There is a decreased likelihood that FPAs involving unstable slopes are incorrectly classified. There is a decreased likelihood that FPAs that need to be inspected in the field to assess landform stability are not identified or brought to the attention of Forest Practices field foresters. Applicants receive better guidance at the time FPAs are filed.

Elements 2: Forest Practices office and field staff have more complete, higher quality information with which to make regulatory decisions.

Element 3: Scientific studies needed to better understand relationships among forest practices activities, unstable landforms, and water quality are carried out.

Element 4: Forest Practices field foresters have improved access to an expert geologist to assist them in making regulatory decisions involving potentially unstable landforms.

Collectively, these outcomes reduce the risk that forest practices activities involving potentially unstable landforms are carried out in a manner that damages public resources or capital improvements of the state, or jeopardizes public safety.

**Performance Measure Detail**
No measures submitted for package

Is this decision package essential to implement a strategy identified in the agency's strategic plan?

This proposal supports the Department of Natural Resources' strategic plan as follows:

Goal: DNR is faithfully implementing its responsibilities as a regulator.
Strategies: Make timely responses to permit applications.

Goal: The public we serve widely and consistently holds DNR in high esteem.
Strategies: Protect public safety.

Goal: DNR's workforce is skilled, knowledgeable, motivated, and effective.
Strategies: Use information technology to maximize investments, continue progress toward digital government, and support integrated business solutions.

Does this decision package provide essential support to one of the Governor's priorities?

Yes, this request provides essential support to several of the Priorities of Government:

- Improve the quality of Washington's natural resources
- Improve the ability of state government to achieve its results efficiently and effectively
- Improve the safety of people and property

Does this decision package make key contributions to statewide results? Would it rate as a high priority in the Priorities of Government process?

Yes, this request contributes to the following statewide results:

Improve the quality of Washington's natural resources
- Establish safeguards and standards to protect natural resources
- Provide good science and resource monitoring data to support decision-making
- Improve individual practices and choices about natural resources

Improve the ability of state government to achieve its results efficiently and effectively
- Improve decision support for government decision makers

Improve the safety of people and property
- Prevent accidents

What are the other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?

Other agencies that rely upon the Forest Practices Rules to safeguard public resources, capital improvements of the State, and public safety would be positively impacted if this proposal is funded. These include the Forest Practices Board; DOE; the departments of Fish and Wildlife and Transportation; the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office; and the Puget Sound Partnership. Approximately 20% of work to be carried out under this proposal is within the Puget Sound Basin.

What alternatives were explored by the agency, and why was this alternative chosen?

Most of the Forest Practices Program's base budget supports core operations, i.e., duties that are directed by law. DNR considered eliminating all of the Program's Small Forest Landowner Office discretionary functions (e.g., stewardship forestry, planning assistance) and using base budget funds that currently support these functions to accomplish some of the work described in this proposal. However, DNR does not feel that such a shift in program emphasis would be consistent with the state's strong, current policy emphasis on providing assistance and support for small forest landowners. DNR also considered acquiring Light Detection
and Ranging (LIDAR) imagery for watersheds that have a high incidence of landslides and high risk that slides could deliver sediment to streams and rivers. LIDAR imagery "strips away" vegetation concealing geological features, thereby allowing foresters and geologists to readily discern unstable landforms that may not be apparent with other types of imagery or even through field inspection. DNR is not requesting resources needed to develop this imagery--even though LIDAR imagery would provide another powerful tool for resource protection--due to the State's projected, overall 09-11 Biennium budget deficit.

What are the consequences of not funding this package?

If elements 1, 2, and 4 are not funded, there is a higher likelihood that some forest practices activities involving unstable landforms will be carried out in a manner that damages public resources or capital improvements of the state, or jeopardizes public safety. If Element 3 is not funded, the AMP will not be able to accelerate production of monitoring data crucial to understanding relationships among forest practices, unstable landforms, and water quality, and maintaining federal CWA assurances.

What is the relationship, if any, to the state's capital budget?

None.

What changes would be required to existing statutes, rules, or contracts, in order to implement the change?

None.

Expenditure and revenue calculations and assumptions

Element 1: Five positions that are the lead FPA processing specialist in DNR region offices are reclassified to Natural Resource Technician 3. Nine positions that process FPAs under the guidance of the regional lead are reclassified to Natural Resource Technician 2. Estimated cost of these reclassification is $153,400 per biennium. This is an ongoing cost.

Element 2: Three Natural Resource Scientist 3s and 1 Natural Resource Scientist 2 continue LHZ. Cost of operating these positions is $1,087,400 per biennium. These are project positions that will continue until December 31, 2014, the estimated date at which LHZ is completed. There will be costs during the 11-13 and 13-15 biennia, but not thereafter.

Element 3: Adaptive management spending has increased by $1,200,000 per biennium. This is an ongoing cost.

Element 4: One Natural Resource Scientist 3 is hired at a cost of $297,700 per biennium. This is an ongoing cost.

Salary and benefits total $976,400.
Personal service contract total $1,200,000.
Good and services, rent, and travel are based on program averages for $166,400.
One-time items include 3 workstations for $21,000.
Equipment is based on one-time vehicle and laptop costs for $76,500.
Agency administrative cost is calculated at 27% and shown as object T for $297,400. FTE associated with agency admin is estimated at 5.0 FTE.

This proposal does not affect any form of revenue.

Which costs and functions are one-time? Which are ongoing? What are the budget impacts in future biennia?

Costs of continuing LHZ (Element 2) are ongoing until December 31, 2014, the estimated date at which LHZ is completed. All other costs are ongoing.

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<tr>
<th>Object Detail</th>
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<tr>
<td>A Salaries And Wages</td>
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September 5, 2008
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<td><strong>Total Objects</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1,320,100</strong></td>
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