

High Level Summary of fpOnline Project

Forest Practices Online (fpOnline) Background: This document describes the need for and benefits that will come from fpOnline, the planned system development time line, and the way in which the project will be carried out.

The need for an improved forest practices information system was recommended in [the December 2019 report](#) of the Aerial Herbicides in Forestry Work Group required by [SSB 5597](#), and 2020's [SB 6488](#) (which passed the Senate but not the House) included a requirement that DNR seek appropriate funding to build fpOnline.

fpOnline:

fpOnline is the replacement for the outdated Forest Practices Application Report System (FPARS) database with limited functionality. This solution will provide a cloud-based COTS/(SaaS/PaaS) solution for online forest practices applications (FPAs), mapping, electronic signature, online payment, and mobile capabilities, as well as online Water Type Modification Forms (WTMFs) and Enforcement Tracking. This will provide forest landowners with the capability to monitor their FPA(s) and WTMF(s) in progress and improve DNR's customer service due to the improvements in FPA and WTMF distribution to DNR's Timber, Fish, and Wildlife (TFW) partner reviewers.

fpOnline will provide the following improvements:

1. A complete online submittal for forest landowners, including signature and payment, will support continuity of business by allowing processing to take place from any location with an internet connection.
2. Improved reliability and streamlined processes using a cloud platform and mobile capabilities to review/approve/disapprove/withdraw FPAs within the statutory thirty-calendar-days from the date DNR receives the application as required in [RCW 76.09.050](#).
3. Improved customer service due to the improvements in FPAs and WTMFs distribution to TFW reviewers, ability of required TFW partners to submit comments, and enhanced legibility of the information (verbiage and maps) provided by applicants, TFW partners, and DNR forest practices program staff.
4. Improved data integrity due to standardization of data and updated metadata.
5. DNR field staff will be able to review current information in the field as they work to review, approve/disapprove, and comply FPAs and concur/non-concur with WTMFs, and work through enforcement documents including Notice to Comply Amendments on FPAs.
6. Landowner field staff and consultants will get information in real time and will be able to track and/or provide information and receive information on FPAs or WTMFs they have submitted.

DNR ranked fpOnline as a high IT project priority for the agency because the project aligns with the agency's strategic plan and fits in one of the main elements in the agency's IT Strategic Plan: to implement contemporary but proven technologies, looking first to commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) /Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) / Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) software requiring minimal customization.

The Forest Practices program submitted a funding decision package for the 21-23 biennium. The Washington Legislature passed the biennial budget ([ESSB 5092](#)) with an appropriation for the Department of Natural Resources fpOnline of \$1.7 million for fiscal year 2023 (FY23) and a near-term obligation of \$1.9 million for fiscal year 2024 (FY24). The Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) ranked fpOnline 18 out of 102 statewide IT projects for the 21-23BN and is one of the IT projects within the OCIO gated funding model.

The fpOnline project has been divided into three phases. The first phase of the project, Phase A, will be the platform for the remaining components to be built from as it keys into main features such as the forest practices application number and the key DNR staff and external reviewers involved.

The three layers of the contracted work are:

- fpOnline – Full build in three phases over two years

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- Phase A – Online FPA, signature, and payment
- Phase B – Online Water Type Modification Form, online Enforcement tracking database
- Phase C – Online Mapping
- Quality Assurance for fpOnline – Two years
- IT Project Manager for fpOnline – Two-year project position

The Office of the Chief Information Office (OCIO) has oversight of this project which includes specific requirements that DNR must provide and implement such as key staff that must be available within the Agency or hired, and a gated funding mechanism. OCIO manages the release of project funds based on required OCIO work and project work DNR has noted which we be completed over the life of the project.

One key role required to be hired is the Quality Assurance role.

Project Quality Assurance (QA):

1. Project Baseline Risk and Readiness Assessment. The QA provider will independently deliver this assessment to the Executive Sponsor and the State OCIO.
2. QA Plan and Work Plan. QA Plan must be completed within 30 days and presented to the DNR Forest Regulation Division management involved with the project. QA Plan will be updated as needed over the life of the project.
3. Ongoing Monthly QA Assessments. In accordance with OCIO Standard [132.20](#).
4. The QA Provider will make QA reports available to the project Steering Committee. The QA Provider will provide regular and routine briefings at the project Steering Committee meetings.
5. QA Provider will independently post all QA reports to the OCIO Project Dashboard within 2 working days of delivery.

Information Technology Project Manager:

This position is responsible for planning, coordinating, and managing a large, highly visible IT project, including planning and managing resources. This position will help ensure that this project is planned, managed, and completed to achieve results that meet the business needs of DNR Forest Practices program as effectively and efficiently as possible. This position has overall project management responsibility and interacts with the vendor team, Product Owner, and Business Analyst daily/weekly.

A description of the reasons for the contracting.

fpOnline:

The main recommendation from the two discovery phases was a hybrid solution that combines different aspects of Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS) and Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) / Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) software into a cohesive, functionality-rich solution. This solution will provide online applications, mapping, signature and payment while providing business flexibility to evolve with changing needs and demands.

Project Quality Assurance (QA) Assessment and Readiness:

DNR does not have staff with the professional expertise to meet the OCIO requirement for providing independent quality assurance services. Specifically, the independent contracted project quality assurance vendor will serve the executive sponsor and division management involved with the project on progress and where improvements/enhancements may be needed during the two-year project.

Information Technology Contracted Project Management:

DNR does not have enough staff to provide a Project Manager from IT Division. The independent contracted IT Project Manager (PM) will work with the in-kind project team Product Owner/Manager/OCM and Business Analyst. The contracted IT PM will:

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- Provide project management direction and leadership to the Forest Practices program and fpOnline project team.
- Provide timely information and consultation about project status, risk and issue resolution.
- Assure compliance with project management standards that reflect industry best practices.

The length and amount of the contracted elements of the project.

The length of the fpOnline system development is expected to be July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2024.

The legislative appropriation from State General Fund in fiscal year 2023 (FY23) is \$1.765 million and \$1.917 million was identified as a near-term funding obligation in fiscal year 2024 (FY24). These appropriations support the build of the fpOnline for two years for a total of \$3.68 million from the State General Fund.

The total project to develop fpOnline is expected to take two years.

Timeline: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 (12 months)

Contracted: Phase A: FPA Online/Data Input /License/Software

The funded Phase A build is expected to take ~ 12 months

Timeline: July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024 (12 months)

Contracted: Phase B: WTMF and FPETS & Phase C: Mapping Tool Integration /License/Software.

The funded Phases B and C are expected to take ~ 12 months.

Timeline: July 1, 2024 – ongoing

Contracted: QA Close-out Report and IT PM Close-out Report with Lessons Learned.

Once the fpOnline Project has been completed there will be on-going needs to support fpOnline to ensure the database functions and is able to meet business needs through time. Those needs include Software Maintenance and Operation Costs and knowledgeable IT staff to support fpOnline. The expertise from an IT Software Developer and an IT Mobile Developer will allow fpOnline to continue to build functionality into the database based on specific, evolving business needs.

Ongoing costs:

- 1) Software COTS/SaaS/PaaS solution Maintenance and Operating costs (Software Updates, Bug Fixes, and Annual License Costs for landowners, reviewers, DNR staff, and general public to interface with fpOnline)
- 2) IT Software Developer - Permanent Position in IT Division
- 3) FP IT Mobile Application Developer – Permanent Position in Forest Regulation Division