

Olympic Experimental State Forest Review Board Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Prepared by: Teodora Minkova

Meeting Date: February 6th, 2013

Meeting Time: 10am-12pm

Meeting Location: VTC bridge between Corvallis, Portland, Olympia, and Forks

Attendees: Jamie Barbour, Acting Assistant Director of Research, PNW, Portland and
Line Officer for Olympia Forestry Sciences Laboratory, PNW, Olympia
Paul Anderson, OESF liaison, PNW, Corvallis
Drew Rosanbalm, Olympic Region State Lands Assistant, DNR, Forks
Bill Wells, Olympic Region Coast District Manager, DNR, Forks
Teodora Minkova, OESF Research and Monitoring Manager, DNR, Olympia (Chair)
Pete Bisson, emeritus scientist at PNW, attended as guest. He is a principal investigator on the OESF riparian status and trends monitoring project.

1. Introduction

Paul Anderson is the new PNW liaison for the OESF; replaced Doug Ryan who retired in June 2012. Jamie Barbour is currently acting as PNW assistant director of research.

2. Riparian status and trends monitoring in the OESF

Teddy gave a brief overview of the project for Jamie Barbour (the others are familiar with the project). PPT presentation of the project was sent to the board members in advance.

Teddy reported on the PNW-DNR meeting on January 15th which purpose was to explore opportunities for collaboration between the two organizations. The meeting was attended by the project team and by PNW managers Paul Anderson and Dede Olson. At that meeting, DNR identified needs for scientific expertise and Paul and Dede suggested specific names.

The board discussed different ways to advance collaboration:

- Articulate the relevance of this project to PNW priorities
 - Monitoring data can be analyzed in regional and national context (given consistency with monitoring protocols of other studies). The OESF stream temperature monitoring is already synchronized with the Rocky Mountain Research Station monitoring (http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/boise/AWAE/projects/stream_temperature.shtml) and is mapped in an informal national network (<https://www.google.com/fusiontables/DataSource?snapid=S3753137OpY>)

- The project falls into PNW *Watershed Health and Resilience* focused area. If any funding becomes available for the focus areas, this project should be given high priority
- Explain the advantages of the OESF as a research and monitoring site (Teddy provided a list to Dede and Paul). In summary: large area with active management; adjacent to unmanaged landscapes in the Olympic National Park; identified research and monitoring priorities related to sustainable management; representative of cool temperate rain forest; important location for long-term monitoring given the projected drastic changes in ecological conditions on the Olympic Peninsula as a result of climate change.
- Talk directly to scientists at PNW. About 12 people were identified to have expertise relevant to DNR scientific needs on this project. Paul expects 3-4 to be interested to participate directly. Some possible examples:
 - Ashley Steel and Rebecca Flitcroft may help with study design, review of protocols for statistical validity and review of the proposed analytical approaches;
 - Steve Wondzell may help with assessing the hydrological relationships between uplands and riparian areas at watershed level;
 - From their experiences in the BLM Density Management and Riparian Buffer Studies, Dede Olson and Paul Anderson may contribute to linkages between forest structure, riparian microclimates and habitats (particularly for amphibians) and stream temperature TMDLs.
 - Karl Polivka, Fish Biologist, might engage in studying fish and macroinvertebrate ecology
 - Bernard Bormann, and Connie Harrington provide connection to the terrestrial management context at basin and landscape scales
 - Steve Reutebuch and other experts in remote sensing may help with developing methods for monitoring the stressors (timber harvest and road mgmt.) at watershed level.
- PWN will request support for Alex Foster and Shannon Claeson to work on this project. It is expected that Alex will spend more than ½ of his time and Shannon less than half of her time. Alex was instrumental in 2012 helping with field recon, sites' installation, setting up the temp monitoring to include in Dan Isaak's dynamic mapping tool network. Shannon provided consultation on the sites' installation. Alex and Shannon could further help with developing and implementing field protocols in 2013. Pete's time as an emeritus scientist is donated.
- Get this project on the agenda of the station management meeting in April, 2013.
- Look for opportunities to fund a research scientist to replace Pete in Olympia. DNR is looking for a fishery biologist to provide expertise not only on this project but on various planning and monitoring efforts across state lands in Washington.

3. New silvicultural project conducted by ONRC

The goal of the project is to define time-trends of diameter increment in western hemlock of different ages and grown under different spacing conditions, and investigate the time-trends of diameter increment of existing large trees and of trees occurring on the edge of gaps. Principal investigator is UW professor and ONRC director David Ford. The project proposal was developed by David Ford in response to DNR research priorities identified for the OESF. It was approved and funded by PNW in September 2012. The funding for FY 2013 (Sept 2012-Sept 2013) is \$100,000.

DNR is yet to meet with David Ford to ensure that the research questions and the study design will meet DNR information needs. A meeting was due in January 2013, now expected for the end of February of 2013. If PNW is to continue funding this ONRC research, it has to be beneficial to DNR. There have been problems in the past precluding ONRC and DNR to collaborate closely. With the new leadership in both organizations, it is possible to improve and this project is a good test.

4. DNR project proposal for decadence creation in the OESF

Teddy presented a new project to be conducted by DNR in the OESF. If any PNW scientists or scientists from the EFRN are interested in the project, they are welcome to inquire with Teddy.

The driver behind the project is an agreement that DNR reached with the Settlement Partners of a 2006 litigation (specifically the Conservation Caucus) as part of a dispute resolution. DNR agreed to create snags and DWD on 225 acres to the levels listed in the spotted owl definition for structural habitat (3 snags/ac and 2,400 cu ft/ac of DWD). The treatments should be completed by 2014 or when DNR develops the new sustainable harvest calculation.

DNR wants to design this habitat enhancement treatment as a learning project, which will provide relevant info to DNR. This will require development of a study plan and future monitoring. Several lines of investigations are considered at this point:

- Effectiveness of different methods for snag creation or comparing one method with the natural process
- Assessing the rate of decomposition and using the data to develop better decay models
- Utilization of snags by wildlife (birds, small mammals, etc.)
- Investigating the role of snags in nutrient cycling
- Using mapped snags and DWD in a feasibility study on the effectiveness of remote sensing methods to inventory understory components

Regardless of the chosen research questions, the study should be accompanied by an assessment of the cost and the operational feasibility of the treatments.

It was suggested to create decadence in conjunction with thinnings to pay for it and to utilize the operation capacity. If so, the planning on this project should start ASAP, since the Olympic Region thinnings are already planned for the next 1 ½ years.

5. Update on the OESF forest land planning

Teddy gave an overview of the planning process and timeline. A revised draft EIS and a draft Forest Land Plan are expected to be published in late spring or summer of 2013. Teddy wrote a chapter on research, monitoring, and adaptive management in the draft plan. It includes a table with key ecological uncertainties identified during the planning process and should be a good information source for PNW researchers. DNR will launch a pilot adaptive management process, which will test the concepts and the elements described in the chapter.

6. Renewal of 4-party MOU

This is an agreement between PNW, DNR, ONF and ONRC for research collaboration. It was signed in 2007 and expired in August 2012.

There has not been much activity on this MOU mainly because of the budget crunch in all participating organizations. Collaborative activities in the OESF and the vicinity increased recently: the OESF riparian monitoring project, re-measurement of the Long-Term Ecosystem Productivity Study, ONRC project on the western hemlock growth, new funding for Connie Harrington's Habitat Development Study in ONF.

The board agreed that it is beneficial to renew the MOU. Paul will be the administrative lead on this. No need to revise the text unless any of the participants want changes.

Action Items:

- Paul to contact PNW scientists for participation in the OESF riparian status and trends monitoring
- Paul and Teddy to work on getting the OESF riparian status and trends monitoring project on the agenda of the PNW station management meeting in April
- Paul to start the renewal of the 4-party MOU. He will contact directly ONF. Teddy can help contacting the ONRC. Send a list of benefits for each organization together with the request for review and approval of the MOU.
- Paul will inform Teddy or direct her to the right sources about the recent development in the EFRN – the new strategic plan, recent efforts for improved communication and data management, etc.