

1 **FOREST PRACTICES BOARD**

2 Field Tour and Meeting

3 June 2 & 3, 2004

4 Klickitat County, Washington

5
6 **Members Present:**

7 Pat McElroy, Designee for Commissioner Sutherland, Chair of the Board

8 Alan Soicher, General Public Member

9 Bob Kelly, General Public Member

10 Doug Stinson, General Public Member/Small Forest Landowner

11 Eric Johnson, Lewis County Commissioner

12 John Mankowski, Designee for Director, Department of Fish and Wildlife

13 Lee Faulconer, Designee for Director, Department of Agriculture

14 Sherry Fox, General Public Member/Independent Logging Contractor

15 Sue Mauermann, Designee for Director, Community, Trade and Economic Development

16 Toby Murray, General Public Member

17 Tom Laurie, Designee for Director, Department of Ecology

18 David Hagiwara, General Public Member (*present for field tour only*)

19
20 **Staff:**

21 Karrie Brandt, Board Coordinator

22 Neil Wise, Assistant Attorney General

23 Paddy O'Brien, Assistant Attorney General

24 Patricia Anderson, Rules Coordinator

25
26 **FIELD TOUR, JUNE 2nd**

27 The Board, staff, and public met at the Best Western Hood River Inn in Hood River, Oregon. The
28 field tour included private and state owned sites in Klickitat County. Discussion topics included
29 northern spotted owl and western gray squirrel habitat, wildlife reserve trees and green recruitment
30 trees, and landscape planning and landowner incentives.

31
32 While at the Longview Fibre Company's harvest unit and the Fowler's property, the Board was
33 shown a collection of bird and wildlife species on loan to the Washington State Department of Fish
34 and Wildlife (WDFW) from Central Washington University. The collection included the following
35 species:

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 36 | Black capped chickadee | Brown creeper | Downy woodpecker |
| 37 | Flicker | Hairy woodpecker | Lewis' woodpecker |
| 38 | Myotis sp (bat) | Northern flying squirrel | Pileated woodpecker |
| 39 | Red breasted nuthatch | Tree swallow | Western bluebird |
| 40 | Western gray Squirrel | Yellow pine chipmunk | |

41
42
43 The field tour ended at 4:30 p.m.

1 **MEETING, JUNE 3rd**

2 The meeting took place at the Best Western Hood River Inn in Hood River, Oregon.

3

4 **CALL TO ORDER**

5 Pat McElroy called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

6

7 **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

8 Executive session, authorized under RCW 42.30.110, convened at 8:01 a.m. and ended at 8:48 a.m.

9

10 Introductions were made of the Board, staff, and attendees. McElroy welcomed new Board
11 members Doug Stinson and Sue Mauermann to their first meeting. Stinson represents family forest
12 landowners and Mauermann is the new designee for the Director of the Office of Community,
13 Trade and Economic Development. Karrie Brandt gave an emergency safety briefing.

14

15 McElroy acknowledged the efforts of the contributors to the wildlife field tour. He thanked
16 landowners George Woodruff and Greg and Kristen Fowler, Chris Lipton and Bob Roth with the
17 Longview Fibre Company, Joe Buchanan, Paula Swedeen, Bill Weiler, Ken Bevis, and Matt Vander
18 Haegen with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Charlie McKinney,
19 Joe Blazek, Jesse Calkins, Tony Gilmer, Patricia Anderson, and Karrie Brandt with the Department
20 of Natural Resources (DNR), along with David Whipple, WDFW, for his coordination and
21 planning.

22

23 **PROCESS FOR PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS AT BOARD MEETINGS**

24 To ensure short and relevant public comments on current Board issues, the Board discussed a
25 preferred process for receiving public comments and presentations during its meetings. The Board
26 agreed to continue with the current process, allowing for a 3-5 minute comment period on various
27 topics. At that time or a later date, the Board will decide whether the information presented is
28 pertinent to their current workplan or whether it should be added to it. The Board may then schedule
29 an additional presentation to be made on the subject if they so choose.

30

31 **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

32 **MOTION:** Toby Murray moved to approve the February 10, 11 & 12, 2004, meeting
33 minutes.

34 **SECONDED:** John Mankowski

1 **Board Discussion**

2 John Mankowski amended the February 12, 2004, minutes on page 3, line 21, from “attributed to
3 habitat loss, persecution, and Sylvatic plague” to “attributed to habitat loss and possibly by other
4 factors such as Barred Owls.”

5
6 Mankowski also amended page 4, line 7, of the February 12, 2004, minutes from “The 20% of
7 active site changes that are . . .” to “Changes in site status . . .”

8
9 Eric Johnson noted a correction in the February 11, 2004, minutes on page 10, line 13, from
10 “excepting” to “accepting.”

11
12 **ACTION:** **Motion passed unanimously.**

13
14 **UPLAND WILDLIFE PLANNING**

15 Mankowski made introductory comments about the previous day’s field tour stating that the wildlife
16 work plan is underway and off to a good start. He said the process is intended to be science-based
17 while paying close attention to implementation. He also informed the Board that a process for
18 wildlife policy decisions would need to be created.

19
20 **SPOTTED OWL UPDATE**

21 Whipple stated that since February, when the draft briefing document was presented, WDFW
22 sponsored a technical stakeholder meeting to obtain more information. Dan Silver was hired as a
23 private facilitator, and the first meeting was held May 24th to discuss the technical nature of the
24 briefing document. The stakeholders were enthusiastic with a shared goal to produce a document
25 that separated policy and technical aspects. Topics for further discussion include specifics about
26 ownership within owl circles, better understanding of the original intent of the “combined function”
27 Spotted Owl Special Emphasis Area (SOSEA) designation and its relationship to landscape
28 planning, data on owl circle size and home range size, and other non-habitat issues that affect owls.
29 The next technical stakeholder meeting is scheduled for June 21st.

30
31 The WDFW is considering how best to set up the policy discussions. The goals are to discuss the
32 policy topics raised by the stakeholder group and in the document, review pending habitat status
33 information from demographic studies and federal reassessments, and deliver a final briefing

1 document with recommendations to the Board. Whipple assured the Board that WDFW is on track
2 to deliver the document in November.

3

4 Johnson asked if the policy stakeholder group would be separate from the technical group.

5 Mankowski replied that the policy group would represent the different caucuses who were at the
6 table when drafting the 1996 spotted owl rule.

7

8 **MARBLED MURRELET BIOLOGY AND HABITAT USE**

9 Steve Desimone, WDFW, gave a presentation on the biology, abundance and habitat use of marbled
10 murrelets in Washington State. He described the marbled murrelet as a small marine bird found
11 only in the northern Pacific Ocean with a relatively long life span of about 10 years. It usually nests
12 high in old growth trees of coastal forests ranging from the Bering Sea in Alaska to central
13 California. In 1992 it was federally listed as a threatened species in Washington, Oregon, and
14 California.

15

16 The marbled murrelet breeding season is from late March to mid-September. It lays only a single
17 egg and may not nest every year; therefore, it is considered to have a low reproductive output. A
18 chick is born with a full covering of down but develops very slowly and takes about 30 days to
19 fledge. The marbled murrelet has also evolved to avoid detection. It is small, effectively
20 camouflaged in its habitat, silent and motionless near its nest, and flies extremely fast. It is also
21 somewhat crepuscular, flying inland at pre-dawn and twilight.

22

23 The habitat of the marbled murrelet is unique among seabirds. It forages exclusively at sea and
24 spends most of the year in the marine environment, but makes daily flights inland to nest and rear
25 chicks. The major nest tree species are douglas fir, western hemlock, western red cedar, and sitka
26 spruce. The marbled murrelet uses horizontal surfaces on a branch or limb called a nesting platform
27 with dense overhead cover for protection from predation. While some of the threats to reproduction
28 and survival are attributed to forest fragmentation and predators such as corvids, hawks, owls, and
29 peregrine falcons, the key issue for the 1992 listing was loss of habitat. And since 1992 about
30 226,000 acres in the three state area have been lost mainly due to harvest.

31

32 In the 1997 United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Recovery Plan, it was estimated that
33 the marbled murrelet population was declining at a rate of 4-7% per year. Because of the elusive

1 nature of the species in its forest nesting habitat, population surveys are done at sea with repeated
2 transect counts. Population counts are subdivided into the Marbled Murrelet Conservation Zones
3 identified in the Marbled Murrelet Recovery Plan (USFWS 1997) and methods are standardized
4 over the three state area. Transect counts are meant to be used as a type of density index from which
5 extrapolations to the larger population are made. Last season's preliminary population assessments
6 for Washington estimated 11,900 (+ or - 4,000) murrelets. With this statistical design, an additional
7 four years of marine surveys are needed for reliable population estimates and trends.

8

9 Forest surveys are also being conducted to increase the understanding of the marbled murrelet's
10 association with the forested habitat. The three methods used to detect presence are forest habitat
11 protocol surveys (audio-visual), radar monitoring, and telemetry. Along with the research and
12 monitoring efforts, a briefing document is currently being drafted for the Board..

13

14 Mankowski asked if marbled murrelets visit old forest nesting areas year round. Desimone said yes,
15 even outside their breeding season, with a lull in September and October and another just before
16 March.

17

18 McElroy asked if any artificial nest studies had been performed. Desimone reported that no one has
19 constructed artificial platforms to see if they would attract the marbled murrelet. Traditionally
20 researchers have selected branches of certain height and put out simulated chicks or eggs to attract
21 attention to the sites.

22

23 Mauermann asked about the correlation between old growth habitat in Zone 1 (Puget Sound, Hood
24 Canal, and the Strait of Juan de Fuca) and Zone 2 (the outer coast) and the population that was
25 being observed. Eric Cummins, WDFW, said, based on telemetry work the birds seen on the outer
26 coast are associated with the forest there. Not so in the north Cascades. The marbled murrelet will
27 actually come down from British Columbia and forage in the San Juan Islands during breeding
28 season and is therefore not associated with the area. There is a large amount of habitat in the
29 northern Cascades and a good core habitat on the outer coast. The population numbers for those two
30 zones are just general indicators of birds that fly that far inland, and also fly that far up and down
31 the coast. Similarly, there is some evidence that the southwest forest stands might be occupied by
32 birds that are actually foraging off the northwest Oregon coast. The scientific community will need
33 additional time this season to complete more intensive telemetry work.

1
2 Alan Soicher asked for affirmation, based on the radar study, of the 80% chance or more that a bird
3 would not be detected using the Pacific Seabird Group survey protocol on the ground. Desimone
4 confirmed but said it would vary depending on the stand and the habitat.

5
6 Soicher also asked whether marbled murrelets tend to cluster their nest sites or choose sites
7 independent of other nesting murrelets. Desimone stated that the birds are not considered colony
8 nesters that they tend to choose sites based on suitable habitat.

9
10 **LANDSCAPE-LEVEL WILDLIFE ASSESSMENT**

11 Joe Buchanan, WDFW, updated the Board on stakeholder activities concerning Element 2 of the
12 wildlife workplan, landscape-level wildlife assessment: evaluate the rules in terms of wildlife
13 protection by looking at the Forests and Fish rules, the snag rules, and other landscape level
14 attributes. The initial discussions of the technical stakeholder group involved the conceptual
15 approach for this project along with the budget and timeline. The group did not discuss policy
16 issues.

17
18 One of the needs identified by the group was the desire to choose one model for this exercise that
19 would be capable of processing questions posed to it, give the desired outputs such as range of
20 biological risks, and evaluate the compatibility of various datasets. The model elements would
21 include species-habitat relationships, home range size, succession, unstable slopes, demography,
22 and community dynamics. The model would map out present forest conditions and develop a
23 predicted outcome of future forest growth that can be used to indicate the likelihood of specie
24 occurrence and identify the type and amount if any of critical missing attribute(s) for presence.
25 Some of the landscapes the group wants to include are private forestlands of both long-term forestry
26 and conversion areas along with some regional stratification for the differences between the east
27 and west sides of the state.

28
29 The group is still seeking additional funding to support the modeling and Geographic Information
30 System work and, though influenced by budget, work can begin on species-habitat relationships,
31 evaluating and selecting a model, and developing assumptions and an analytical approach.

1 Tom Laurie asked if the data would be gathered on home ranges that extend beyond Washington's
2 borders. Buchanan stated that in those circumstances the information would need to be generalized
3 to Washington.

4
5 McElroy commented that the Board would need to know the context of Washington's situation.
6 What is going on within the federal lands, and how Washington fits into that larger landscape.

7
8 Sherry Fox encouraged the group to include lands that are being converted from agriculture to
9 forestry in the model analysis to insure an accurate landscape picture.

10

11 **SMALL FOREST LANDOWNER INCENTIVES**

12 Paula Swedeen, WDFW, and Rick Dunning, Washington Farm Forestry Association (WFFA),
13 presented incentives for wildlife planning and conservation for small forest landowners. Small
14 forest landowners are a big influence on forest landscapes controlling half of the private forestland
15 in Washington, which is estimated at 3½ to 4 million acres. They often own urban rural interface
16 areas and lands in between federal blocks, so there are movement issues as wildlife travel from one
17 large reserve to another.

18

19 There are some tendencies in small forest landowner management such as longer and smaller
20 harvest rotations, planting multiple tree species, and sometimes multiple thinnings before a final
21 harvest. Because of these tendencies, small forest landowners are particularly suited to provide safe
22 harbor to the smaller home range size species like the flying squirrel and Lewis' woodpecker. They
23 not only make environmental contributions but family foresters add to communities both
24 economically and socially through the development of family values as well as forestry values.
25 However, the WFFA has been seeing an increasing decline in membership due to the many
26 challenges small forest landowners are faced with such as, high management costs and
27 disproportionate regulatory impacts per acre of ownership, inaccessibility and expense of the
28 Habitat Conservation Plan process, conversion pressures from rising land prices and population, the
29 willingness of owners to pass their lands on as tree farms, and the difficulty in accepting a 10 year
30 process of increasing regulations.

31

32 Incentives could be more effective for small landowners who are challenged to stay in forestry
33 while adhering to the regulatory approaches. Incentive programs need to be acceptable to the users,

1 cost effective, easy to understand and implement, and have options to fit the differing needs of
2 landowners. Some ideas to pursue could be long-term forest practices permits, renewable
3 generational leasing of easements, carbon credits, or branding products that come from small forest
4 landowners. Another idea is forest banking, which is an annual payment in exchange for third party
5 stewardship management.

6
7 The next steps are to develop a concept paper based on interviews with small landowners, agency
8 staff, experts in incentive programs, and the stakeholder community for comment. Once the
9 proposal has been refined and submitted to the Small Forest Landowner Advisory Committee for
10 input, WDFW will deliver the incentives package proposal to the Board for consideration.

11
12 Mankowski asked how the Board would track if it was doing the right thing in terms of rates of
13 conversion or the commitment to stay in forestry whether through benchmarks or specific objectives
14 that the Board could measure against. McElroy responded that the Small Forest Landowner Office
15 (SFLO) has been tasked with a periodic assessment to measure the changes taking place on the
16 landscape in terms of the small forest landowner conversions and track divisions as well.

17
18 Johnson asked what the small forest landowners harvest in comparison to the industry. Dunning
19 stated that the information wasn't currently available, but that he would share those numbers with
20 the Board as soon as they are determined.

21
22 Fox commented that the incentives approach is a wonderful way to begin connecting landowners
23 and agencies together to communicate.

24
25 Toby Murray commended those individuals who have worked on the project and for getting a
26 process laid out. He supports the effort.

27
28 **REVIEW OF WILDLIFE WORK PLAN TIMELINE**

29 Whipple informed the Board that no changes were made to the timeline since the last distribution
30 and asked the Board for questions.

31
32 Laurie asked if the Board would receive updates on the timeline. Whipple responded that WDFW
33 would update the Board with any changes during Board meetings or through correspondence and

1 would distribute a new version of the timeline.

2

3 **MOTION:** Pat McElroy moved to adjourn the meeting.

4 **SECONDED:** Tom Laurie

5 **ACTION:** Motion passed unanimously.

6

7 Meeting adjourned at 2:08 p.m.