



**TFW/Forests and Fish Policy
Forest Practices Board**


P.O. Box 47012, Olympia, WA 98504-7012

**Policy Co-Chairs: Stephen Bernath, Department of Ecology
and Tom Robinson, Association of Counties**

September 29, 2009

MEMORANDUM

To: Forest Practices Board

From: Stephen Bernath, Co-chair
Tom Robinson, Co-chair 

Subject: Fixed-width Riparian Review Update

The memorandum from the Forest Practices Board to the Adaptive Management Program Administrator, dated May 21, 2009, requested Forests and Fish Policy to examine and develop a fixed-width, no-entry option to be added to WAC 222-30-021(1) Western Washington riparian management zones. On August 6, 2009, Darin Cramer delivered the Board's request with his recommendation to form a Policy sub-group which would utilize existing technical and policy information to develop a fixed-width, no-entry riparian management proposal.

Policy accepted this recommendation and formed a sub-group with the responsibilities to develop a charter, oversee proposal development and deliver regular updates to the full Policy committee. The sub-group prepared, and Policy accepted, a charter that includes two options for developing a fixed-width, no-entry riparian management zone:

1. Initiate an adaptive management process to develop and evaluate a range of potential rule alternatives applicable to all landowners. This process would not be possible to complete within the time frame outlined in the Board's request. Policy recommends this adaptive management proposal be added to the Policy work list.
2. Utilize the existing alternate plan template process to develop a fixed-width buffer applicable only to small forest landowners. Policy believes this option could be completed within the Board's desired timeframe and outlined the process and tasks to complete a template in the charter.

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The charter is attached for your review. The sub-group contains both Policy representatives and CMER members familiar with the topic. Their emphasis is to develop a small forest landowner template offering a fixed-width buffer that achieves riparian function equivalent to current rules.

The Policy sub-group will give a report to the Board at their November meeting.

cc: Forest Practice Board Liaisons
FFR Policy Members

Fixed-Width RMZ Policy Subgroup Charter
September 3, 2009

I. Introduction

On May 21, 2009 the Forest Practices Board (Board) forwarded a fixed width RMZ Adaptive Management Proposal to the Adaptive Management Program Administrator (AMPA). The Board requests examination and development of a "fixed-width, no-entry" management option to be added to WAC 222-30-021(1) Western Washington RMZs for Type S and F Waters. The concept is a no-cut buffer which in effect extends the core zone out a specified number of feet depending on site class and eliminates the inner and outer zones. The Board would like to receive a consensus recommendation from Policy during the winter of 2009/10, ideally in the form of specific rule language. The Board's preliminary vision encompasses the following elements:

- An extended no-touch core zone
- No inner or outer zone
- One width for each site class for all stream sizes
- The maximum length of the harvest unit is 1,000 feet
- The required distance between harvest units is either the length of the harvest unit or 300 feet, whichever is the greater distance
- The option is available to all landowners, however only for small harvest units 20 acres or less

The AMPA delivered the Board's proposal and his recommendation to Policy on August 6, 2009. The AMPA recommendation was to accept the proposal and form a Policy sub-group to oversee proposal development; the Board and AMPA also recommended the proposal be developed utilizing existing technical and policy information. Therefore, the sub-group should contain both Policy representatives and CMER members familiar with the topic, such as the existing CMER DFC sub-group. Policy accepted this recommendation and has formed a sub-group who has responsibility for developing this Charter, overseeing proposal development and delivering regular updates to full Policy.

In response to the Board's request to provide a fixed-width buffer, the subgroup discussed two options:

1. Initiate an adaptive management process to develop and evaluate a range of potential rule alternatives applicable to all landowners. This process would not be possible to complete within the time frame outlined in the Board request. Policy recommends this adaptive management proposal be added to the Policy work list, and will scope the resources and time frame to complete such an approach.
2. Utilize the existing alternate plan template process to develop a fixed-width buffer applicable only to small forest landowners. Policy believes this option could be completed within the Board's desired time frame; the Charter below outlines the process and tasks to complete it.

II. Membership/Purpose/Tasks/Deliverables/Process

Primary Membership - Policy Subgroup:

Stephen Bernath, DOE (Chair)

Chase Davis, UCUT

Rick Dunning, WFFA

Marc Engel, DNR

Adrian Miller, WFFA

Jim Peters, NWIFC

David Whipple, DFW

Miguel Perez-Gibson, CC

Ben Cleveland, DNR

Membership - CMER/Technical Staff:

Mark Hicks, DOE

Nancy Sturhan, NWIFC

Chris Mendoza, CC

Curt Veldhuisen, SRSC

Terry Jackson, DFW

Purpose:

Develop a simpler RMZ option that achieves equivalent function as current rule. The approach will likely entail a template for SFLOs under the Alternate Plan rule.

Tasks & Responsibilities:

1. Characterization of SFLO riparian harvest (type, size, etc.) - DNR, DOR
2. Identify proposals - Policy subgroup
3. Compare proposals with current rule (information from task 1) - DNR, Policy subgroup
4. SFLOAC input - Policy subgroup
5. Equivalency assessment and status summary for November 2009 FPB meeting - Policy subgroup
6. Scope and evaluate risk mitigation strategies (20 acre limit, length/size limit, implementation monitoring) - Policy subgroup (caucus technical staff)
7. Focused scientific review (how to determine equivalency, etc) - CMER subgroup
8. SFLOAC endorsement - Policy Chairs
9. Present proposal to Policy and Board in February 2010 - Policy Chairs

Deliverables:

1. Charter
2. Status report to the Board
3. Final proposal to the Board
4. Supporting documentation/data

Group Process, Reporting, and Support:

1. Policy subgroup are primary participants; caucus technical staff and/or CMER subgroup may participate when needed and called upon by Policy subgroup
2. Policy subgroup members are to coordinate with SFLOAC
3. Consensus decision making; if not possible use Dispute Resolution
4. Regular verbal reports to Policy; update to the Board in November
5. Support is expected from DNR, caucus technical staff and CMER (see task list)
6. Schedule meetings every two weeks (Stephen/Darin)

7. Designate recorder for each meeting

Adaptive Management Program Ground Rules:

TFW ground rules in affect

III. Timeline

First subgroup meeting was August 20, 2009; subsequent meetings will be scheduled approximately every two weeks with the goal of completing this work by the February 2010 Forest Practices Board meeting. Accomplishing assigned tasks between meetings, punctual attendance, and being prepared for meetings will facilitate regular progress towards meeting this goal.