

## **Alternate Plan Template Workgroup Report to TFW Policy Committee**

October 24, 2019

The Forest Practices Board (Board) on February 10, 2015 accepted the proposal initiation (PI) from the Washington Farm Forestry Association for a western Washington alternate plan template. The Board directed the TFW Policy Committee (Policy) to review the proposal initiation and provide to the Board a strategy to fully evaluate the proposal and make recommendations to the Board.

In response, Policy through the Adaptive Management Program Administrator (AMPA) presented the Policy recommendations for an adaptive management program (AMP) review of the proposed to the Board in May 2015. At that time, Policy recommended forming a subcommittee (Workgroup) to implement a three-step strategy following guidance in WAC 222-12-0403 and Board Manual 22. The Board accepted Policy's recommendations and in July 2015 the Workgroup initiated the evaluation of the SFL AP template.

In October 2018, Policy approved an Alternate Plan Template Workgroup charter to describe the three-step strategy and workgroup deliverables for review of the SFL AP template, and amended it in July 2019 to establish the timeframe to bring the recommendations to Policy by October 31, 2019.

The charter outlined the three-step strategy for review of the SFL AP template proposal:

- Step 1. Perform a review to determine whether the proposed SFL AP template meets the criterial outlined standards in WAC 222-12-0403 for an "alternate plan template."
- Step 2. Perform a literature synthesis conducted through the AMP to evaluate past and current literature generated since the Board adoption of the FFR rules including meeting the five forest practices riparian functions within the riparian management zone. This review would provide important context for the evaluation of the proposed SFL AP template *and* future alternate plan template proposals.
- Step 3. Provide a written response with consensus recommendations to the Forest Practices Board for their May 2019 meeting which:
  - Succinctly describes the results of both the literature synthesis and policy evaluation of the proposed SFL AP template prescriptions following the Board adopted FFR rule for the development of alternate plan templates found in WAC 222-12-0403;
  - Confirms the proposed SFL AP template prescriptions meet the resource objectives and protect public resources per WAC 222-12-0403(2);
  - Determines if the proposed prescriptions meet the criteria as a template prescription designed to meet resource objectives to address common situations which are repeatedly addressed in alternate plans or strategies to simplify the development of future plans or strategies, including addressing low impact situations and addressing site-specific features per WAC 222-12-0403(3).

In addition to the three-step strategy for review of the SFL AP template, the Workgroup was also tasked by the Board's November 2017 request to consider strategies to identify site-specific

situations in which certain prescriptions could be grouped into alternate plan templates, for example a conifer restoration AP template or a conifer thinning AP template.

The Workgroup deliverables, after a collective review of the proposed simplified prescriptions, are to provide recommendation(s) to Policy which describes whether the SFL AP template proposal as a whole or in part meets the criteria of an alternate plan template(s) and recommendations for how the proposed prescriptions could be changed, where needed, to become qualified as an alternate plan template(s) as outlined in WAC 222-12-0403:

1. Articulates which individual prescriptions (or alternative prescriptions) qualify for template development, based on a consensus vote; and
2. Identifies which prescriptions were not considered applicable *or* minority/majority views and recommendations on specific prescriptions where consensus was not met.

The Policy AP template Workgroup has completed their review of a simplified version of the proposed *Alternate Harvest Prescriptions for Small Forest Landowners in Western Washington* template, and has identified two potential experimental alternate harvest prescriptions in response to the Board request to identify site-specific situations to offer additional prescriptions for small forest landowners.

### Findings

The following findings are listed in the order in which the workgroup addressed them. For the proposed *Alternate Harvest Prescriptions for Small Forest Landowners in Western Washington* template, the workgroup has determined, through non-consensus majority decisions, the SFL AP template:

1. As a whole does not meet the criteria of an alternate plan template; and
2. In part does not meet the criteria of a template(s).

The workgroup has also determined, through consensus decisions:

3. There are proposed prescriptions within the SFL AP template proposal which could be changed to become qualified as alternate plan template(s) prescriptions; and
4. The experimental conifer restoration and conifer thinning alternate harvest prescriptions should continue to be developed.

### Recommendations

Therefore, the Work Group recommendations to Policy:

1. The SFL AP template proposal, in whole or in part, does not meet the criteria of a template per the rule standards in WAC 222-12-0403.
2. The State Caucus and other interested parties continue to work on the experimental conifer restoration and conifer thinning alternate harvest prescriptions and develop finished recommendations for Policy by May 2020.
3. That Policy sanction a work group to evaluate if or under what site-specific conditions a 75 foot and 50 foot buffer, respectively, would be acceptable as an AP template prescription(s) for Type F streams; and, if or under what site-specific conditions a 25 foot buffer would be acceptable as an AP template prescription(s) for Type Np streams. The work group should perform the evaluation and develop prescription recommendations for Policy by May 2020.