Schedule L-1 Subject Matter Experts,

Thank you for participating in the revision of Schedule L-1 (Appendix N, Forest Practices Habitat Conservation Plan) Functional Objectives and Performance Targets.

Background

The Forest Practices Habitat Conservation Plan (FPHCP) was adopted in 2005 by the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), on behalf of the state of Washington, as permitted by the federal services (USFWS and NOAA) under issuance of a multispecies incidental take permit. The FPHCP provides protection and the long-term conservation of aquatic species and maintains Washington state water quality standards while also providing a regulatory climate conducive to a viable forest products industry. The FPHCP covers over 9 million acres of private forestland and some state forestlands east of the Cascade Crest. The prescriptive elements of the plan are based on the states Forests and Fish law (i.e., Forest and Fish Report, 1999; Forest Practices Salmon Recovery Act, 1999; FPHCP Appendix C and N; DEIS Appendix C) and the State's Forest Practices Program implementing that law.

Schedule L-1 (FPHCP Appendix N) is part of the original Forest and Fish Report (FPHCP Appendix B) that was adopted by the Washington Forest Practices Board in 2001, with minor revisions, and later promulgated into the FPHCP. Schedule L-1 includes three overall performance goals, and resource objectives as defined by functional objectives and performance targets. Resource objectives are key aquatic conditions and processes affected by forest practices. These resource objectives are intended to meet the Overall Performance Goals where "Forest practices, either singly or cumulatively, will not significantly impair the capacity of aquatic habitat to: 1) support harvestable levels of salmon, 2) support the long-term viability of other covered species listed in the FPHCP, and 3) meet or exceed water quality standards."

Resource objectives consist of Functional Objectives which are broad statements of major watershed functions potentially affected by forest practices, and Performance Targets (PTs) which are measurable criteria that define specific, attainable target forest conditions and processes. The existing performance targets are based on the FPHCP's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that contains alternatives analysis, Environmental Effects on riparian and wetland processes, fish and fish habitat, amphibian and amphibian habitat, etc. (2005). The DNR Adaptive Management Program (AMP) was created to provide science-based recommendations and technical information to assist the Forest Practices Board (FPB) in determining if and when it is necessary or advisable to adjust rules and guidance (WAC 222-12-045). The DNR AMP is made up of two committees established by the FPB, the Cooperative Monitoring, Evaluation, and Research Committee (CMER) and the Timber, Fish, and Wildlife Policy Committee (TFW Policy). CMER is the science body of the AMP and conducts research that tests forest practices rules to ensure that resource objectives are met. The Performance Targets in Schedule L-1 are the benchmarks intended to inform CMERs research objectives, and the critical questions designed to meet those objectives, when developing studies to assess the impact of forest practices on aquatic species covered by the FPHCP and maintaining WA state water quality standards. As Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), you will be provided with a more in-depth background of the DNR AMP, and the science and analyses from the FPHCP EIS supporting

current PTs, before you begin working on further development and/or revision of PTs, to ensure that you appreciate how the PTs in SL1 are consulted and used in the FP Board's AMP processes.

Performance Targets up for Revision

Not all of the PTs are in need of revision based on prior and active research being conducted by CMER to update several PTs, therefore the CMER SL1 workgroup has already prioritized which PTs will be considered for revision, receiving necessary approvals to proceed. The prioritization was based on PTs that are absent, vague or essentially a repeat of an existing rule rather than a measurable target. Based on this prioritization, the Workgroup has recommended that three SME groups be formed where the following PTs from SL1 will be reviewed and possibly revised:

Group 1: Shade, Riparian Condition, Litterfall, In-Stream LWD
Group 2: Pool Frequency, Pool Depth, Peak Flows, Fines in Gravel
Group 3: Wetlands

General Tasks and Expectations for Subject Matter Experts

The SMEs will be tasked with reviewing and potentially revising, replacing, or adding to the PT measures listed above, according to their assigned group. SMEs are expected to utilize the best available science in reviewing the Performance targets. This includes familiarization with a variety of background documents (e.g. FPHCP EIS 2005), completed relevant CMER research (provided), and relevant peer-reviewed literature.

SMEs should become familiar with the FPHCP and SL1 documents, including the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), which describes the alternatives analysis and the variety of analyses, studies, and expertise that were used in formulating the current FOs and PTs. SMEs should especially focus on the following chapters from the FEIS: Chapter 2 Alternatives Analysis, Chapter 4 Environmental Effects-Riparian and Wetland Processes, Chapter 6 References, and Appendix B Riparian Modeling. It is important for SMEs to understand how the current FOs and PTs were developed and their intent, before beginning the review and revision process. Additional reference materials may be required within individual groups.

SMEs should also become familiar with completed CMER studies that are directly or indirectly relevant to the PTs that are up for revision (list will be provided). CMER studies were designed to assess whether PTs are met under current forest practice rules, as well as inform the development of new PTs. The findings and final reports for these studies will be provided, and it will be up to the SME groups to determine the relevancy of these studies to the revision of the PTs. Equally as important, the SMEs should search for and incorporate relevant peer-reviewed literature and reports relevant to the assessment of the PTs under review.

In addition, the SMEs should be familiar with the Stillwater report (2012), which is a previous review of CMER science that includes recommendations regarding Schedule L-1 Performance Targets. The role and use of performance targets to protect aquatic ecosystems has advanced since the publication of the Schedule L-1 document. It is expected that SMEs build on past efforts using their own expertise in concert with the best available science.

The SME groups are expected to meet frequently to discuss existing PTs and their revision, including conducting necessary tasks (homework) in between meetings. The groups should assess existing PTs using current best available science and decide whether; 1) PTs are consistent with the current state of knowledge, 2) if not, is there enough new information to warrant revising, replacing, or adding to the PTs, and 3) if so, provide recommendations for new PTs. For example, new performance targets may be recommended to address new or missing targets that align with best available science. Wetlands, in particular, are missing performance standards in line with scientific knowledge that has been gained since the original document was written. All performance targets should be reviewed considering the potential influence of climate change. The groups are expected to provide scientific justification, in written form, for the decisions made on individual PTs, including why they were or were not changed and if they were changed, what is the scientific basis supporting the recommendations for newly proposed PT.