



**DEPARTMENT OF
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RESOURCES**

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MEMORANDUM

December 27, 2024

TO: TFW Policy

FROM: Lori Clark, Adaptive Management Program Administrator (AMPA)
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SUBJECT: 2025-2027 CMER Work Plan and TFW Policy's Prioritization Process

Cooperative Monitoring, Evaluation, and Research Committee (CMER) approved the 2025-2027 Work Plan in December 2024. Below are highlights of changes to the 2025-2027 Work Plan:

- CMER and Science Advisory Groups (SAGs) completed a project assessment exercise to recommend withdrawn projects and project add-ons,
- The completed and/or withdrawn projects were moved to an appendix,
- Appendix A was updated to reflect approved Work Plan changes and identify CWA projects, and
- Projects that were not assigned to a SAG (e.g., forest chemicals program, Roads project) were verified by CMER to ensure these projects are still relevant to the AMP priorities.

The State Auditor's Office (SAO) completed a Performance Audit¹ of the Forest Practices Adaptive Management Program (AMP) in January 2021. In response to the SAO audit, the Forest Practices Board (Board) approved an implementation plan for 11 of the AMP recommendations to support improving program performance and becoming more effective in decision-making. One of the recommendations involved setting clear AMP priorities² including synchronize the CMER Work Plan, the Master Project Schedule (MPS), and TFW Policy annual work plan to establish a clear process for setting program priorities to improve the AMP implementation schedule on the Forest Practices Board (Board) high priority research and monitoring projects which support the Forest Practices Habitat Conservation Plan and projects that are key milestones for the maintenance of Clean Water Act assurances. TFW Policy has already completed the MPS Contingency Plan which is an element of the Board-approved Net Gains Options, 3.3 Set Clear AMP Priorities. The next step is to advance the TFW Policy prioritization element with the 2025-2027 Work Plan update.

The 2025-2027 CMER Work Plan may be used to inform TFW Policy's prioritization process and the refinement of MPS. TFW Policy will need to agree on a clear set of priorities. The Board-approved Net Gains Options, 3.3 Set Clear AMP Priorities, suggests this can be achieved by orienting the focus of the program such that:

“• CMER studies that test rule effectiveness or validate rules will have the highest priority in both work plan and the MPS.

¹ [Performance Audit of the Adaptive Management Program](#)

² **SAO Recommendation 5:** Implement a “net gains” approach to each proposal, project, and decision that benefits more than one caucus by considering packages of projects instead of individual projects. Five Net Gains Options were approved. Net Gains Option 3 – Set Clear AMP Priorities.

- Projects agreed to by consensus and that meet Department of Ecology's Clean Water Assurances (CWA) will have second highest priority."

Structured Decision Making can be effectively used to establish a list of program priorities that would be utilized to further prioritize all other projects that don't meet the criteria listed above. Compass Resources Management will support TFW Policy in the prioritization process in February and March. Once TFW Policy has completed this process, the criteria for prioritizing projects included in the MPS and in the CMER Work Plan needs to be consistently applied and may be suggested as an addition to Board Manual, Section 22, for the Board's consideration.

Policy may adopt and approve a standing list of program priorities for each biennium to guide CMER's work. Changes to program priorities should be clearly communicated to CMER in time to be included in the next CMER work plan (on/before July of even years). New approved projects, typically introduced through the Proposal Initiation (PI) process, are included in each subsequent work plan update.