



Policy Scoreboard

Editor's Note: To keep SAF members informed of state society policy activities, Policy Scoreboard is a regular feature in the Western Forester. The intent is to provide a brief explanation of the policy activity. You are encouraged to follow up with the listed contact person for detailed information.

Judge Directs BLM to prepare new Resource Management Plan

In a Remedy Order issued on November 19, 2021, Judge Richard Leon of the US District Court for the District of Columbia, directed the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to prepare a new Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Oregon and California (O&C) Railroad Lands of western Oregon.

In September 2019, Judge Leon granted partial summary judgement in several lawsuits involving O&C lands, finding that the BLM 2016 O&C RMP violated provisions of the O&C Act by excluding portions of the O&C land base from sustained yield timber harvest. Under the 2016 O&C RMPs, only 20 percent of BLM O&C lands were included in the harvest land base. The Judge also ruled that the Obama-era expansion of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument was a violation of federal law.

Under the November 2021 Remedy, the 2016 RMP was vacated; however, that order stayed until a new RMP is completed, effectively leaving the 2016 RMPs in place while a new RMP is in preparation. The Judge retained jurisdiction of the case and ordered the BLM to prepare an expedited schedule to complete RMP preparation. He further ordered the agency to complete necessary Endangered Species Act consultations and report on its progress toward preparation on the new RMP within 120 days.

Oregon Private Forest Accord

On September 30, representatives from 12 forest owners and 13 environmental groups signed the Oregon Private Forest Accord. This accord was brokered

by the Governor and her staff, and is intended to address concerns, particularly from environmental groups and certain state legislators, regarding riparian species habitat and water quality, and concerns by forestland owners over the mounting business uncertainty due to the proliferation of petitions and lawsuits filed against state and federal agencies and ballot initiative petitions.

Key elements of the agreement include expansion of riparian buffers to upgrade fish habitat, a new unstable slope management protection program, enhancements to forest road construction and maintenance standards, and an adaptive management and policy process to handle future challenges. The agreement includes accommodations for small forest landowners to address the impacts family forest owners would otherwise face.

The next steps include introduction

and passage of legislation (February '22 short session) making changes to the Oregon Forest Practices Act (OFPA), development of OFPA rules, and securing a statewide Habitat Conservation for private forestlands in Oregon.

New National Policy Statement

At the December board meeting, SAF's Board of Directors approved a new position statement, "Forest Products Industries and Markets." Drafted by the Committee on Forest Policy, the statement highlights the importance of supporting policies, programs, and investments in US forest industries and markets that will increase long-term sustainable production for US forest products. The full position statement can be found at: https://www.eforester.org/Main/Issues_and_Advocacy/Statements/Forest-Industries-and-Markets.aspx. WF



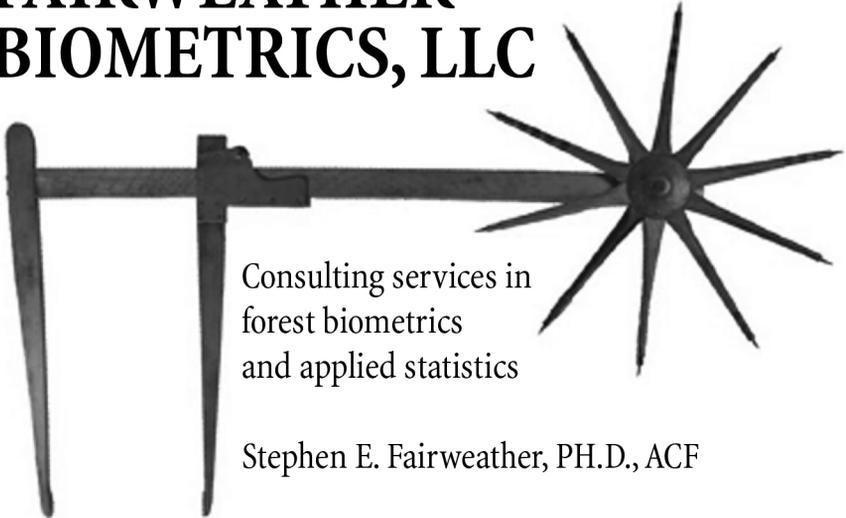
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