

Eastside Forest Health - Challenges and Solutions

Forest structure and composition have changed significantly in dry forests of eastern Washington. High densities of dead and moisture-stressed trees increase potentials for the spread and intensity of fire, disease, and insect outbreaks, leading to massive environmental degradation, higher costs of management and greater atmospheric pollution. The capacity of these forests to withstand projected reduced precipitation and elevated temperatures under a climate change scenario is very much in doubt.

The Northwest Environmental Forum on Eastside Forest Health Challenges and Options will provide an opportunity for an invited group of participants to address an actionable strategy to restore and maintain the ecosystem services of the eastside dry forests. Resilient eastside forests protect the basic ecosystem services – wood and fiber, water and medicinal resources; environmental services – carbon sequestration, biodiversity, wildlife habitat, erosion control and pollination; and cultural services – community stability, recreation, tourism, educational and spiritual.

A strategy should include:

1. Adaptation to climate change and mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions
2. Prioritization of early actions on the eastside forests within the strategy
3. Innovations across ownerships and constituency lines
4. Agreements to monitor and adapt
5. Trust and confidence-building through the Forum collaboration

It is anticipated that attaining an ecosystem services strategy will improve forest resilience in the face of climate change, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce fire damage and danger, promote rural economic stability, increase the availability of forest-based renewable energy and protect fish and wildlife habitat. A portion of the Forum will be devoted to sharing tribal experience in addressing forest conditions on their lands and on the collaborative processes of TAPASH and the Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition.

Objective

Convene a working Forum where participants can candidly and constructively share perspectives regarding the condition of Washington State eastside forests; models for success; barriers of scale, institutions, society and technology; and solutions.

Desired Outcome

A consensus agreement on the elements of an actionable strategy for restoring the ecosystem services that are provided by eastside forests.

Participation

By invitation only to a limited number of knowledgeable people who are prepared to actively engage issues so as to increase the likelihood of achieving a substantive outcome.

Forum Location

Spokane Convention Center

334 W Spokane Falls Blvd. • Spokane, Washington 99201 • (509) 279-7007

Forum Agenda

Tuesday, October 27, 2009

6:00 Reception | [Spokane Convention Center • Room 201](#)

7:00 School of Forest Resources Dinner, hosted by Interim Director Tom Hinckley

Wednesday, October 28, 2009

8:30 Convene | [Spokane Convention Center • Room 111A](#)

Welcome & Introductions – [Brian Boyle](#), *Forum Leader*, Northwest Environmental Forum
Comments about the work ahead – [Bob Rose](#), *Forum Consultant*

9:00 Imperatives Panel – Why are we here?

Moderator: [Tom Hinckley](#), *Interim Director*, University of Washington School of Forest Resources

[Mary Wagner](#), *Regional Forester*, USDA Forest Service, Region 6

[Peter Goldmark](#), *Commissioner of Public Lands*, Washington State Department of Natural Resources

[Billy Frank, Jr.](#), *Chairman*, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

9:45 Technical Issues Panel – What do we know, what needs to be done and how?

[David Peterson](#), USDA Pacific Northwest Research Station and University of Washington: *Managing resilience of forests to effects of fire and climate change: the state of science*

[Richy Harrod](#), USDA Forest Service Wenatchee Laboratory: *Creating fire resilient stands and landscapes within Eastside forests*

[Sue Livingston](#), U.S. Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife Service: *Applying what we know about dry forest ecosystems to a large-scale species management strategy – the Northern spotted owl recovery plan*

[Bill Gaines](#), USDA Forest Service Wenatchee Laboratory: *Integrating Science and Management: the Okanogan-Wenatchee Dry Forest Restoration Strategy*

10:45 Break

11:00 Discussion with Technical Panel

Moderator: [Brian Boyle](#)

11:30 Collaborative Cases – What lessons were learned? What can be done to improve the effectiveness of future cooperative efforts?
 Moderator: [Bob Rose](#)

TAPASH Sustainable Forests – [Phil Rigdon](#), Yakama Nation, and [Betsy Bloomfield](#), The Nature Conservancy
Northeast Washington Forestry Coalition – [Lloyd McGee](#), Vaagen Brothers, and [Mike Petersen](#), The Lands Council

12:30 Lunch | [Spokane Convention Center • Room 102](#)

1:30 Pre-conference survey instrument – Where do Forum participants agree and disagree on the issues at hand? Presentation of survey analysis with discussion of participant perspectives

[Sergey Rabotyagov](#), University of Washington School of Forest Resources

2:00 Participant Perspectives & Considerations

What did the panels and survey tell us that can guide the strategy?
 Roundtable format, brief statements, followed by moderated discussion and participant Q&A.

Consider Anchor Forests within a very large landscape-scale approach for developing and implementing strategies to support manufacturing, processing, transportation, and work force infrastructure; maintain ecosystem functions and services; and preserve options to contend with future uncertainties.

[Gary Morishima](#), Quinault Management Center, with [Luke Rogers](#), University of Washington School of Forest Resources

3:30 Elements of an Actionable and Holistic Strategy – Small Groups

Constraints & Opportunities, Retention of Working Forests on the Landscape
 What can we do to develop a broadly supported, actionable strategy that includes a focus on investments to maintain processing, harvesting, and management infrastructure?

GROUP	MEETING ROOM
1SC	Spokane Convention Center • Room 101
2SC	Spokane Convention Center • Room 102A
1NC	Spokane Convention Center • Room 202A
2NC	Spokane Convention Center • Room 202B
1NE	Spokane Convention Center • Room 202C
2NE	Spokane Convention Center • Room 111A

6:00 Reception | [Spokane Convention Center • Room 201](#)

7:00 Collaborating Dinner | [Spokane Convention Center • Room 201](#)

Small groups stay together at dinner to consider what they have heard and where there are areas of opportunity for action with common agreement.

Thursday, October 29, 2009

8:30 Convene | [Spokane Convention Center • Room 111A](#)

8:45 Crafting a strategy – small group discussions that summarize previous day's conclusions and report back
Develop actionable regional-specific strategies that address forest health

10:30 Break

10:45 Forum participants reconvene to consider small group recommendations

12:00 Lunch | [Spokane Convention Center • Room 102](#)

12:30 Proposals for Action

1:30 Next Steps and Follow-up

2:00 Adjourn