



**ELLIOTT STATE RESEARCH FOREST**  
**Science Advisory Panel & Exploratory Committee Discussion**  
**Monday, November 16, 3-5pm**

**Attendees:**

Eric White (USFS), Jennifer Allen (PSU), Linda Nagel (CSU), Serra Hoagland (USFS), Cass Moseley (UO), Gwen Busby (Greenwood Resources), Matt Sloat (Wild Salmon Center), Katy Kavanagh (OSU), Randy Rosenberger (OSU), Tom DeLuca (OSU), Caitlyn Reilley (OSU), Peter Harkema (Oregon Consensus), Jennah Stillman (Oregon Consensus)

**Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review**

Science Advisory Panel Chair, Jennifer Allen, welcomed the group and thanked the panel for their continued engagement in this process. Facilitator, Peter Harkema, then shared an overview of the day's agenda, noting that the draft proposal from OSU was distributed in advance for review. He noted that the focus for today's conversation would be on the riparian research strategy (fixed buffer widths versus an outcomes-based strategy), governance (specifically around litigation and potential impacts to academic freedom), Marbled Murrelet analysis (implications for the research design), and financial sustainability (specifically the necessary up front costs).

**OSU Elliott State Research Forest Proposal**

Tom DeLuca, Dean of the College of Forestry thanked the SAP for their input to date. He noted that this proposal has involved the public and various experts along the way in different capacities and that the general sentiment around the proposal feedback has been largely positive. Along with his excitement for this proposal moving forward, Tom shared his hope for the SAP's potential interest in a role of continued engagement after 2020.

**Science Advisory Panel Input and Discussion**

It was noted that the following sections of the proposal have had updates since the SAP last reviewed them:

- ESRF governance structure
- ESRF financial information
- Power Analysis of the Elliott State Forest Research Design
- Potential Marbled Murrelet Habitat Distribution and Research Strategy at the Elliott State Forest
- Summary of the Research Design (for peer review) and summary of external peer reviews

Governance



Randy Rosenberger shared that an advisory workgroup had developed a proposed governance structure that would address potential issues around litigation and that included accountability and enforceability. The advisory committee accountability proposal is currently under consideration by OSU leadership and administration and it is expected that the university and stakeholders will reconvene to resolve outstanding issues. The governance structure assumes that there will also be an OSU Advisory Committee composed of external appointees that is directed to provide support to function effectively, along with input and advice, but will hold no decision making power.

The SAP members present provided their reflections during the discussion, some of which include, but are not limited to:

- There is a good reason to have the Governor appoint the Advisory Committee membership, but rather than the committee creating their own by-laws, they should receive a charge from the Dean.
- Rather than having mediation and decisions flow through the Board of Trustees, that role could be kept at an appropriately high level.
- There was a suggestion to reserve that academic judgement not be subject to the public appeals process. A risk to academic freedom and integrity, would be the reality of different stakeholders wanting different outcomes. To that end, OSU should make a list of the topics or situations that would not be subject to appeal and what would be, rather than leaving that determination so broad.
- Recognizing that the proposal's 'commitments' are what OSU would be held accountable to, there could be a secondary annual report (from the ESRF Executive Director to the public), that reports on OSU's performance of accountability of those commitments.
- It was acknowledged that there was a lack of clarity around the scientific advisory body and process of who decides what research gets to be done.

#### Financial Sustainability

Randy shared that the initial modeling was conducted based on the harvest revenue from the research design and participation in the carbon market and acknowledged that the revenue projections do increase overtime. Recent changes were integrated based on SAP feedback, like the increased allocation for social science and core expenses adjusted accordingly. He shared that there is inevitable uncertainty in regards to long term vulnerabilities, such as timber market price volatility, large natural disturbance events, etc. that could impact the cash flow for sustaining the research forest and dependency of full time employees.

The SAP members present provided their reflections during the discussion, some of which include, but are not limited to:

- In acknowledgement of the upfront costs, it could be helpful to create a cash flow profile with capital revenues mapped out (like timber, carbon, etc) overtime and investments clearly outlined. Then a more comprehensive sensitivity analysis could be done to account for factors of vulnerability and variability, like mill closures, timber prices, carbon prices, etc.
- There was conversation around engagement in the carbon market and generating revenue overtime, with one SAP member noting that voluntary carbon markets have been performing well this past year and are expected to continue to perform well. Part of the long term ESRF research goal is to better understand soil-carbon dynamics and that research could possibly play a role in the development of new components for carbon market credits.

### Marbled Murrelet Analysis

Katy Kavanagh shared a brief overview, updating the group that there was a large amount of data that had come forth from OSU researchers, including Kim Nelson, pertaining to marbled murrelet stand occupancy in the Elliott State Forest. This data was analyzed and after integration, did not significantly impact the research design. There is an acknowledgement that the stands will need to be entered at some level, but the application is challenging due to the tension between academic and social perceptions. There was a discussion of the effort involved in ascertaining occupancy and SAP members expressed interest in research that would inform Murrelet response to varying levels of management. It was noted that the HCP will provide a take permit to ensure the protection of their total habitat. This research may be controversial but informative, as the Elliott is seen as a keystone location in terms of potential species recovery.

### Riparian Research Strategy

Given time constraints, in a brief overview, Katy shared the concept of the proposed outcomes-based approach, in comparison to the predominantly used fixed buffer width. Katy expressed that there will be experiments in the ESRF that differ from the ways that forest management has operated in the past and that this will be an area of need for the SAP in the future to help steward and communicate the pursuit of innovative, transformative science.

### **Next Steps**

Tom shared his appreciation for the SAP guidance in this process over the last 8 months and acknowledged that although the initial proposal has been created, there is still further work ahead. He asked SAP members to consider continuing to engage with OSU through the next year or beyond. The group also discussed the December Land Board meeting, acknowledging that there would be an opportunity to lend perspective on the proposal and share what the identified opportunities are from the academic perspectives interested in these topics. Jennifer raised the point that one of the SAP values was that they were independent from OSU. Peter



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said that he would follow-up about this further, to provide information about the meeting and explore the possibility of the SAP providing comment.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:00 p.m .