

Context and Commitments

The Board and Department recognize that:

Bold actions, based on the best available science, is needed to address the composition and structure of the forests in Oregon.

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- Policies will be responsive and adaptable to global and local climate change while mitigating threats to ecosystems, human health and safety, and economies.
- Policies will strive for a reciprocal relationship between forests and human cultures representing multiple identities. There is a responsibility to take care of forests so that forests can take care of us, by providing mutual benefits and enabling a wide range of realized values.
- Policies will support development of local and regional economies. Diversification and innovation in all aspects of forest management should promote the adaptive capacity of forests.

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Oregon's rural, urban and suburban populations have varying social perceptions and expectations about forests and how forests should be managed to benefit humans and other species.

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- The vision and goals put forth in this document are applicable statewide. The policies to enact these goals will be applied in a place-based manner at the regional and local level.
- Policies will seek to reflect and integrate the needs of all communities and identities including those which have been, and continue to be, marginalized.
- The board and department will provide clear and accurate information about forests in Oregon and accessible opportunities for all Oregonians to provide meaningful input on policies and decisions.

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The State has a unique and specific government-to-government relationship with 9 federally recognized Tribes in Oregon.

<https://www.oregon.gov/odf/aboutodf/Pages/tribalrelations.aspx>

- Policies will honor government-to-government relationships with Sovereign Nations; and meet obligations to protect tribal cultural resources.
- Policies will encourage collaboration with Tribes by pairing western science with Indigenous Knowledge.

Workforce supply continues to be a challenge, and there is a reduction in the ability of managed forests to cover associated costs in this dynamic state of climate and social change.

- Policies will recognize the changing educational requirements for a trained and skilled workforce that will support the work needed in Oregon.
- Policies will promote educational and employment opportunities that include communities and identities that have been and continue to be excluded from the profession.

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Our principles

Commented [JK1]: From updated plan format. Built from principles and context content from prior format. Could also be construed as “Values”

- Understanding and honoring the complexity of **the relationships Oregonians have with their natural resources** and recognizing the value of diverse objectives across ownerships.
 - *Alignment points from OKT draft report:*
 - *“When asked about values, people will identify similar values; however, we saw differences when people go into more detail about what those values mean to them.”*
 - *“People also hold a wide variety of views about what forest management even means...”*
 - *Identified as “What people have in common”: Forests as part of individual and collective identities, pride in Oregon’s forests, relationships to forests being tied to past and future generations and their relationships with forests.*
 - *“...several people also placed high importance on the lived experiences that people who live in or adjacent to forests have compared to people who live further away from forests.”*
- Creating and maintaining a **diverse, equitable and inclusive organization** that houses a **well-trained, service-focused workforce**, based on a **culture of learning**.
 - *Alignment points from OKT draft report:*
 - *“Information in multiple languages would be helpful” and “information and signage in multiple languages from particular communities.”*
 - *“More person-to-person contact or guided opportunities to learn, explore and engage” with “a diversity of people serving in this capacity in Oregon forests.”*
- Honoring the **sovereignty of the nine federally recognized Tribes in Oregon**, recognizing their ancestral connections to the land, understanding their management practices, and protecting their cultural resources.
 - *Alignment points from OKT draft report:*
 - *31% of respondents selected “Relying more on Traditional Ecological Knowledge” as something that would help people connect more related to Oregon’s forests.*

Crosswalk of the draft Vision for Oregon's Forests with Oregon Kitchen Table's draft report and 2022 Oregon Values and Beliefs Center surveys

- Building and maintaining **diverse, inclusive, trust-based relationships** with Oregonians, partners, urban and rural communities, and local governments through collaboration, communication, transparency and accountability.
- **Using technology, best available science and recognized best practices** to guide policy decisions and agency operations to build and enhance the resiliency of Oregon's forests, reduce the impacts of climate change, minimize wildfire impacts and encourage biodiversity.
 - Note from OKT draft report flagged for consideration:
 - *"People have differing beliefs about 'the science' involved in forest management. There is a strong sense that other people are misinformed or unaware of what is factually accurate or proven regarding approaches to forest management. No matter where people sit, there is a belief that other people are not taking into account the true science behind forest management. We heard this particularly related to clear cutting and thinning practices and more generally to even the concept of human beings managing forests at all."*
- Promoting **economic development and diversification in the forest sector** that promotes the adaptive capacity of forests.

Key theme not addressed in current draft of strategic plan: Education/interaction

From OKT draft report:

- *"More programs in high school and colleges that teach about forests."*
- *"Education opportunities geared at all ages, from very young children to adults."*
- *"Information in multiple languages would be helpful" and "information and signage in multiple languages from particular communities."*
- *"More person-to-person contact or guided opportunities to learn, explore and engage" with "a diversity of people serving in this capacity in Oregon forests."*
- *"...several people mentioned a desire for more information about or access to volunteer opportunities in interviews, open ended comments, and conversations."*

From various 2022 OVBC reports on forests (forest management, state forest management and wildfire and forest management):

- *"About one in three residents would be open to engaging more directly through a committee on forest policy in Oregon."*

Crosswalk of the draft Vision for Oregon's Forests with Oregon Kitchen Table's draft report and 2022 Oregon Values and Beliefs Center surveys

- *"...more than one in five residents don't know enough about federal, state, and private forest management to have an opinion. The lack of information is relatively high across demographic groups."*
- *"Even splits across categories [whether federal and state forests should be logged less often, more often, or the same amount] sometimes indicate a lack of knowledge about a subject. The high proportion of people who say they don't know enough to have an opinion (24% and 25%) suggests lack of knowledge may be an issue even for those with opinions."*
- *"Four in 10 residents would appreciate more opportunities to learn about and get involved with Oregon's forests."*
- *One in five residents don't know enough about whether the state's forests should be wilderness areas set aside for purposes and benefits other than commercial timber production to have an opinion.*
- *One in three Oregonians aren't sure if forest fires tend to start on private or public land, with women, suburban residents and those without school-aged children at home being the most likely to say they don't know enough about this to say which is accurate.*
- *Throughout the wildfire and forest management survey, 20-30% of residents "commonly say they needed more information to answer questions about forest management." However, only 11% said the same regarding prescribed burns— "an issue that is frequently covered in the media and can be somewhat charged."*
- *"Although forestry has historically played a significant role in Oregon's economy, residents continue to find themselves in need of additional information about the industry to form full opinions about forest management. In 2019, about one-quarter of Oregonians described themselves as not very or not at all familiar with the forestry industry. Today, roughly the same proportion of residents need more information to know if forests are managed right."*
- *Political debates about forest management, media coverage and social media influence may have contributed in the decline in residents who feel that forests are managed well (more than half in 2019 to about 40% in 2022).*