

Telling the Story of Oregon's Forests

Oregon Forest Resources Institute
2012 Strategic Plan



Oregon Forest
Resources Institute

Acknowledgements

Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) gratefully acknowledges the contributions of nearly 250 forest sector leaders, scientists, educators and others who shared their views and insights to shape this Strategic Plan.

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OFRI Partners

Every day, Oregon Forest Resources Institute relies on the commitment and contributions of its many partners. Creative partnerships and collaborations are indispensable to the success of OFRI's programs. Current partners include foundations and other funders, state and federal agencies, city and county governments, forest scientists and educators, school districts and teachers, higher education institutions and faculty, forest sector companies and associations, forestry professionals, conservation groups, soil and water conservation districts, professional contractors, other private sector partners, non-profit organizations and many volunteers. Thank you!

Cover Photo: [Students examine forest habitat during a field trip to the Rediscovery Forest – a collaboration between The Oregon Garden and Oregon Forest Resources Institute.](#)



Executive Summary

About OFRI

Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) was created by the Oregon Legislature in 1991 to improve public understanding of forests, forest products and forest management and to encourage sound forestry through landowner education. Some of the key activities spelled out in OFRI's legislative mandate include:

- Supporting educational and cooperative efforts to improve stewardship of forest lands.
- Encouraging and assisting private forest landowners to "meet or exceed" forestry regulations.
- Communicating public expectations of forest stewardship to private forest landowners.
- Conducting research and disseminating information – through conferences, workshops and other means – about modern land management practices.
- Increasing public understanding of the benefits of wood products.

Twenty years later, OFRI continues to pursue its statewide mission and strives to be a balanced source of information and research on forest issues – the "go-to place" for Oregon forest facts. With a thirteen member Board of Directors and an efficient professional staff, OFRI has continuously reshaped and expanded its programs. Currently, OFRI operates 43 public education and communication programs covering seven program and administrative categories.

OFRI is funded by revenues derived from a State of Oregon tax on timber harvest. In recent years, the collapse of the housing market and declining demand for wood products have reduced OFRI's resources. In response, OFRI's Board has adopted an allocation formula that can be adapted to various funding levels.

Target budget percentages for OFRI's major program and administrative areas are shown below.

OFRI Budget Targets

| Program Area | Target |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Public Education | 40% |
| K-12 Education | 26% |
| Forest Landowner Education | 15% |
| Forest Interpretation | 2% |
| Media Information | 2% |
| New Opportunities | 3% |
| Board Support and Administration | 12% |

2012 Strategic Plan

From its earliest years, OFRI has maintained a tradition of planning ahead. In early 2011, OFRI began a process to update the organization's strategic plan in consultation with forest sector representatives and other key stakeholders.

Strategic planning encompassed these key elements:

- In-depth interviews with 54 forest sector leaders and other observers knowledgeable about OFRI
- Two online surveys drawing contributions from 182 participants
- A strengths - weaknesses - opportunities - threats (SWOT) scan looking ahead to future trends affecting OFRI and Oregon's forest sector
- An inventory and assessment of OFRI's current programs
- Two strategic planning workshops with OFRI's Board of Directors

OFRI retained Barney & Worth, Inc. to assist the agency with the strategic planning process. The firm's role was to support OFRI's Board and staff in facilitating the agency's long-term strategic direction setting and decisions.

Research results

Forest sector leaders and other close observers give OFRI uniformly high marks in fulfilling its core mission. Words / phrases stakeholders employ most often in evaluating OFRI’s effectiveness: highly effective, efficient, consistent, collaborative, excellent, professional, unmatched track record, great partner, committed, balanced, mature, helpful, source of pride to forest sector, uniquely qualified, one step ahead, visible, connected – very successful.

Looking ahead, opportunities and challenges on the horizon indicate a need to update and expand OFRI’s current education and communication strategies and programs.

| Looking Ahead | |
|--|---|
| <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forests still a mainstay of Oregon economy 62,000 forest landowners OFRI staff / leadership / credibility | <p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High percentage of forests in federal ownership Decline in timber harvest to 2.7 bbf (2009) Future forest workforce: hard to attract workers |
| <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results of Hinkle Creek / paired watershed research Improving market conditions K-12 schools more open to external educational support | <p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of working forest Eastside forest sector profitability / survival Loss of functioning rural economies in forest-dependent areas |

Strategies

OFRI leadership has adopted twelve strategies that will further contribute to OFRI’s mission. Seven of the strategies affect several OFRI program areas:

Providing leadership: use OFRI’s abilities as a convener, coordinator and catalyst to advance forestry and natural resources education statewide with an emphasis on how forest management decisions affect the vitality of Oregon’s rural, forest dependent communities

Educating opinion leaders: raise awareness on forest matters for elected officials, media representatives, business leaders and other influentials

Engaging new partners: build new collaborations outside the forest sector with conservation organizations, rural development agencies and rural communities, schools, Latino groups and others

Building on grantsmanship success: seek additional opportunities for grants, donations and volunteer service

Defining headline topics: focus OFRI communications each year on one or two key topics or themes

Distilling key messages: provide simple phrases, consistently delivered, that communicate vital forest issues to the public

Extending public education statewide: reach metro and rural audiences across Oregon with OFRI’s educational advertising and outreach programs

The remaining strategies are specific to a single OFRI program area:

Raising forest literacy: use the Oregon Forest Literacy Program to guide all of OFRI’s K-12 programs

Streamlining OFRI’s communications: slim down electronic and print communications to focus on items that busy readers most need to know; reproduce OFRI’s reports and “bestsellers” in abbreviated formats to enhance their accessibility

Reshaping and marketing the website: create a new architecture for oregonforests.org to make the website more accessible, relevant, and easier to navigate and develop a comprehensive marketing plan to drive new viewers to the website

Experimenting with social media: take advantage of new communications tools to reach newer and younger Oregonians

Increasing Board participation: involve Board, staff and others in working groups – small teams that delve into the details of OFRI’s individual program areas.