

Polk County Forestland Classification Committee

Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2009

9:00 to 5:00

Oregon Department of Forestry, Dallas, OR.

Meeting Called to Order by Terry Lamers, (Chair) at 9:10, on Thursday, December 15, 2009, Oregon Department of Forestry, Dallas Unit, 825 Oak Villa Rd., Dallas, OR

Members in Attendance: Jeff Classen, Don Duhrkopf, Terry Lamers, Tom Parsons, and Brad Withrow-Robinson.

Quorum present.

Guests: Allison Blair, ODF, Dallas Unit, Gregg Cline, ODF North Cascades District, Eric Foucht, ODF, West Oregon District.

Meeting Agenda:

Terry handed out and reviewed the Agenda.

1. Introductions of Committee members and staff.
2. Discussion of role of Committee.
3. Review and approval of minutes from 12-5-08 meeting.
4. Review website.
5. Update on news release.
6. Classify Forestland.
7. Lunch.
8. Classify Forestland.
9. Public comment period.
10. Select future meeting dates.

Discussion on Role of Committee:

Jeff Classen gave a brief review of the purpose of the committee's work and the process to be used. Referred to Statute 526 that created the Forestland Classification Committees, and a separate statute, 477, that empowers creation of separate committee to look at Wildland Urban Interface issues.

Don felt it should be noted that this Committee convened by the County, under statute, rather than by the State. There was some discussion as to the relationship between the FCC and WUI committee, noting that they are different committees, with different purposes. Both have to look at the Wildland Urban Interface, this committee in the process of deciding what land is forestland and thus to be given fire protection, whereas any WUI committees formed will be looking at landowner actions and responsibilities regarding fire conditions (thinning, defensible space etc.). There is no official connection between the two.

Approved 1/22/09

Minutes:

Minutes from the 12-5-08 meeting were reviewed. A motion to accept (Tom) seconded (Jeff) approved unanimously.

Website:

A brief discussion was held about the website. Leslie and Brad were commended for the work done to bring the page into service, and provide required public access to information, as well as background. ODF has provided a map showing the Protection district boundary, so the page is essentially complete. Brad was asked to make some small changes with Leslie (at their discretion) to further clarify the separation between the FCC and WUI committee activities.

Press Release:

Jeff reported that the release prepared by him and Rod Nichols about the Committee's work was sent out to area papers. Only the Dallas IO showed interest, and ran an article on the 14th.

Classification:

At 9:50 the Committee began the work of Classification

The Classification carried out at this and subsequent sessions are a DRAFT classification of lands within the Fire Protection District, in Polk County, and will remain draft until it has been submitted to the County Clerk and duly certified.

Eric reviewed the function of the GIS interface program he has developed, and how he would record the Committees draft classification decisions as they were made and conveyed to him. The resulting data set will indicate the committee's decision (as Forest, Non-Forest, Exempt, or needing Review), and the date the decision was made. The GIS generated map (seen by the Committee projected on screen) reflects decisions made by applying a colored translucent overlay. Thus progress and decisions can be tracked visually. At the end of each work session, a small progress map will be generated and attached to the minutes, the data will be stored on the ODF network server, as well as backed up on an external drive.

The Committee began the classification process in the very southwest corner of the county (section 5, Township 10S, Range 8W) and worked northward in a systematic manner through Township 10S 8W, 9S 8W, 8S 8W, 7S8W and 6S8W, returning to the southern border, and continuing thru 10S 7W, 9S7W, 8S7W, 7S 7W and 6S 7W, before returning to the southern border and working northward through 10S 6W, 9S 6W, 8S6W and 7S6W. The committee worked rapidly through the sparsely populated, mountainous and heavily forested area, largely in Private Industrial or Federal ownership, in the western region of the County, viewing aerial photos section by section. Federal

(BLM) properties are not classified, but are protected under contract between BLM and ODF.

The Committee slowed down and viewed progressively smaller areas as it approached the eastern margin of the Coast Range, adjoining agricultural and residential areas, deferring action along the margin until a later time.

Mike and Gregg left the meeting at 12:05.

Committee recessed for lunch (12:30 – 1:20).

After lunch, the Committee moved its attention to the Coast Range-Valley, margin, beginning at the southeast corner of the Protection District (Section 4, T 10S, R5W). The Committee began to work northward in systematic manner, assessing properties using decision criteria, considering forestland definition, and the contiguousness to forestland, reaching the area around Burns Corner (Airlie Rd and Hwy 223) before concluding work for the day.

Meetings:

The next meeting date for the Committee was confirmed to be Thursday, January 22, 2009, from 9:00 to 5:00, another subsequently Thursday, February 5, 2009, from 9:00 to 5:00, both at Oregon Department of Forestry, Dallas Unit, 825 Oak Villa Rd., Dallas. A third date was tentatively set for Tuesday February 10.

Terry thanked Eric and the committee and recessed the meeting at 4:40.