

**Western Forestry Leadership Coalition  
Threats to Western Private Forests  
Drafting Committee**

**Protocols**

**I. Purpose**

The Western Forestry Leadership Coalition (WFLC) has undertaken the *Threats to Western Private Forests* strategic initiative in partnership with the US Forest Service (USFS) Pacific Northwest Research Station and Western Wildland Environmental Threats Assessment Center (WWETAC) as part of continuing efforts to meet its mission of promoting science-based forest management that serves the values of society and ensures the health and sustainability of western forests. WFLC is a coalition of the state foresters of the western states and Pacific islands as well as the western US Forest Service (USFS) regional foresters, research station directors, and the USFS Forest Products Lab director. The initiative has engaged key stakeholders through a series of workshops to explore and synthesize threats to the health and sustainability of private forests in the western US. With the first round of workshops complete, a Drafting Committee has been formed to produce a consensus report. The report, along with policy briefs developed by participants and partners, will be distributed to key policy makers at all levels of government to facilitate the implementation of recommendations to address barriers to maintaining private working forests.

**Drafting Committee Scope**

The Drafting Committee will draft a consensus report to be approved and accepted by the WFLC Executive Board. This report presents as an opportunity to materially influence the future health and sustainability of western private forests through the coordinated actions of land management agencies, industry, and individual private landowners. The report will be distributed to key policy makers at all levels of government, including Congress, the US Forest Service, the US Department of Agriculture, the US Department of Interior, western governors, tribal governments, and state forestry, fire, wildlife and land management agencies. It will be used by federal agencies to drive research agendas and by state forestry agencies as they set forest management and landowner assistance priorities.

The Drafting Committee will work collaboratively to develop a report that achieves the following outcomes:

- Effectively synthesizes the results of the workshops by addressing the region-specific issues expressed during the first part of the initiative.
- Utilizes Drafting Committee expertise and relevant information from outside of the group to articulate long-term threats to western private forests.
- Proposes consensus recommendations appropriate for western state foresters and others to pursue as they seek to address the articulated threats.
- Aims to gain the acceptance and endorsement of workshop participants, all Drafting Committee members, and final approval by the WFLC Executive Board.

Because the audience will be “interested, informed decision-makers,” the report will be written in a manner that promotes understanding and action on the part of the reader.

## **II. Drafting Committee Composition**

The Drafting Committee will be composed of experts who bring different and relevant perspectives to the initiative. The WFLC has sought to bring together Drafting Committee members who are knowledgeable on how natural, economic, and social trends interact to influence private forests and forestry. Moreover, the WFLC has sought to assemble a group that can represent the expertise and interests of various perspectives including:

- State forestry agencies
- US Forest Service
- Other state and federal agencies
- Local government
- Industry
- Land owners
- Tribes
- Academics
- Conservation organizations

Some members of the Drafting Committee have multiple affiliations, interests, and areas of expertise. In addition, members provide biological, legal, regulatory, and operational expertise relevant to the issues under discussion.

## **III. Process and Schedule**

The Drafting Committee is scheduled to have three face-to-face meetings. Each meeting is vitally important for the building of a consensus product. All Drafting Committee members are expected to attend all meetings. As tasks are determined, sub-groups will likely want to work cooperatively over conference calls to meet project output timeline needs. The full Drafting Committee may also want to schedule regular conference calls to monitor progress, discuss next steps, and comment on drafts.

### **Meeting Schedule and Outcomes**

Meeting 1: August 12 – 13, 2009 (Portland, OR)

- Understand process and approve protocols
- Review workshop results and discuss approaches to integrating results
- Define additional research needs
- Develop outline, approach, and program of work

Meeting 2: October 7 – 8, 2009 (San Francisco, CA)

- Review first draft
- Refine outline, approach, and program of work for second draft

Meeting 3: November 18 – 19, 2009 (Denver, CO)

- Respond to comments by WFLC Executive Board and workshop participants
- Resolve any areas of disagreement
- Develop final draft for approval by WFLC Executive Board

A first draft for Drafting Committee review is expected by September 25, 2009. A second draft for review by workshop participants and the WFLC Executive Board is expected to be complete by October 30, 2009. A final draft of the report is expected to be complete by December 4, 2009 and will be made available to the WFLC Executive Board for approval at their fall meeting. The workshop participants and Drafting Committee members will be asked if they would like to be attributed in the final product with an appropriate designation for their involvement.

#### **IV. Roles**

##### **Drafting Committee Members**

Drafting Committee members will be expected to:

- Attend all face-to-face meetings;
- Adhere to the protocols adopted by the group;
- Meet deadlines for drafting and commenting on drafts;
- Proactively engage in collaborative problem solving to address the range of interests brought to the table; and
- Work with their own groups, organizations, and constituencies to understand and articulate their interests, to secure their on-going input, and, as appropriate, to build support for the final recommendations.

##### **Outside Experts**

Drafting Committee members can reach outside of the group to access expertise that is not represented by the membership itself. These outside experts can contribute to the product but will not participate in the consensus decisions of the group.

##### **Observers**

Meetings of the Drafting Committee will be by invitation only. Members of the Drafting Committee may bring a limited number of additional individuals as technical assistance with the *explicit agreement* of the WFLC Acting Executive Director. Additionally, a limited number of specific individuals may be invited to observe the meetings. Observers will be required to adhere to the same protocols and meeting guidelines (see below) that apply to members. Observers will be asked to refrain from speaking during the meetings; rather they should speak through Drafting Committee members. Members of the Drafting Committee may ask the facilitator to limit comments by observers and observers may not object to recommendations put forward for consensus adoption. Observers may provide feedback through a Drafting Committee member if desired.

## **Western Forestry Leadership Coalition**

The WFLC's role is as the convener and implementer of the *Threats to Western Private Forests* initiative and final product. The WFLC will facilitate the production of a consensus report, which highlights threats to private forestry in the western United States. The WFLC staff will pursue the development of recommendations according to the timeline set out by the WFLC Executive Board and will seek to meet the interests of the full WFLC membership. The WFLC staff will seek to ensure that the initiative's outputs are as relevant as possible to its membership – both state foresters and USFS members.

WFLC staff will also provide logistical support and coordination for the travel needs and meetings of the initiative. Key WFLC staff are:

Caitlyn Peel, Acting Executive Director: [cpeel@colostate.edu](mailto:cpeel@colostate.edu) / 303-445-4363

Dana Coelho, Program Manager: [dcoelho@fs.fed.us](mailto:dcoelho@fs.fed.us) / 303-445-4364

In addition to assisting the Drafting Committee as a WFLC staff member, Dana Coelho will also serve as a consensus member of the Drafting Committee with all the responsibilities and opportunities that infers.

## **Project Core Planning Team**

The Core Planning Team for this project includes Caitlyn Peel and Dana Coelho of WFLC, Jerry Beatty of the USFS Western Wildland Environmental Threats Assessment Center (WWETAC), Jamie Barbour of the USFS Pacific Northwest Research Station Focused Science Delivery Program, and Will Singleton of Singleton Strategies LLC. This project is a cooperative effort between the WFLC and the US Forest Service. Jamie Barbour and Jerry Beatty have been involved in planning the initiative from its conception and in considering how the initiative results might be integrated into their respective research programs.

Jamie Barbour, Program Manager: [jbarbour01@fs.fed.us](mailto:jbarbour01@fs.fed.us) / 503-808-2542

Jerry Beatty Director: [jbeatty@fs.fed.us](mailto:jbeatty@fs.fed.us) / 541-416-6583

## **Facilitation and Process Support**

Will Singleton, Principal of Singleton Strategies LLC, is a consultant who is providing neutral facilitation services and process planning to the initiative. In consultation with Drafting Committee members, Will Singleton will assist with agenda development, convening, facilitation and drafting of the meeting summaries and final report. He will also work between meetings to ensure that the work product meets deadlines and that full agreement is reached wherever possible.

Will Singleton, Principal: [will@singletonstrategies.com](mailto:will@singletonstrategies.com) / 303-895-7570

## **V. Discussion Guidelines and Approach**

### **General Approach**

The Drafting Committee members will approach their deliberations as collaborative problem-solvers seeking to produce consensus concepts and/or recommendations that address, insofar as possible, the practical needs and interests of all participants. As necessary, the group will work jointly to educate and build understanding regarding the participants' values and interests related to the issue; while also developing a baseline understanding of essential scientific, technical, legal, economic, and political information. All members agree to work proactively to meet the broad objectives of the *Threats to Western Private Forests* strategic initiative.

Collaborative problem-solving is most successful when parties agree that their major interests have been heard, considered meaningfully, that other participants have made every effort to address their interests in any final proposals, and that the final proposals accurately characterize any outstanding differences. The group will strive for consensus; for purposes of the Drafting Committee, consensus is defined, at a minimum, as “no objections” or as being able to “live with” an outcome, perhaps in light of how it fits into a larger whole.

In an effort to achieve the greatest degree of consensus possible, the group will work to build proposals by identifying, exploring and, as much as possible, satisfying all key interests. When agreement is not possible, the group will work to accurately and respectfully understand and document the different perspectives at hand. The facilitator will use a variety of techniques to calibrate and then reflect the actual levels of consensus achieved by the Drafting Committee.

If it is not possible to reach agreement on a specific recommendation, the Drafting Committee will exercise one or more of following options presented in the potential order in which the options would be exercised:

1. Drafting Committee members will make their best attempts to address the stated interests of each side. Those who object to a specific idea have the added responsibility to craft a solution that they believe will meet their needs as well as the meet the interests of the group.
2. The Drafting Committee may decide to leave out the disputed idea or recommendation if only one or two participants support it – in other words, recommendations that fail to achieve “critical mass” may be left out.
3. The recommendation or area of dispute will be put to the WFLC Executive Board for their determination about its relevance to the initiative, the WFLC Executive Board will respond with their recommendation on how to resolve the issue. The Drafting Committee may use the recommendation to address the dispute.
4. A narrative will be included in the report that highlights the discussion of the group and provides an explanation why full consensus was not possible.
5. Ultimately, each Drafting Committee member will have to decide if the final product is acceptable to him or her and will make the determination whether or not to associate their name with the report. It may be that the overall product has enough positive aspects that a specific area of disagreement is overshadowed by the report's positive attributes.

It is important for members to recognize that concepts may be discussed in an effort to craft recommendations that ultimately obtain broad support. Members may not expect to exclude concepts from being discussed. Members may work throughout the drafting process to find a recommendation that meets the consensus agreement of the group. It is also important for members to be proactive in their deliberations. If a concept or recommendation is not acceptable, members who object are expected to commit energy to finding a way to meet the needs of the whole group.

## **Ground Rules**

The Drafting Committee's protocols and interaction assumptions (proposed and to be ratified or modified at the first meeting) will follow a modified version of the "Chatham House Rule."<sup>1</sup>

Discussions are "off the record" insofar as no one will represent the Drafting Committee's collective views or positions without the agreement of the group itself.

Although it is expected that each person will be speaking on behalf of their organization, company, or agency, formal hats are off to the greatest extent possible. Individuals are encouraged to draw from both their personal and institutional experience/expertise in discussions.

Anyone attending is free to use the information in the group's deliberations but will not publicly represent the views of others present.

All members are encouraged in discussions to "explore without committing." This further frees up the group to explore potential solutions without viewing those explorations as formal proposals.

As pertains to specific discussions, members agree to:

- Disclose interests
- Listen fully to understand
- Look for ways to address not only your own interests but those of others as well
- Participate; share the floor; be concise
- Look ahead—acknowledge the past but don't rehash it
- Be explicit and factual—ask for clarification if confused
- Let expertise fuel, not constrain, creativity

---

<sup>1</sup> The Chatham House Rule is used worldwide to facilitate both free speech and confidentiality at meetings. Meetings may be held "on the record" or under "the Chatham House Rule". In the latter case, it may be agreed with the speaker(s) that it would be conducive to free discussion that a given meeting, or part thereof, should be strictly private. When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information or opinions disclosed to them, subject to two conditions. (a) Neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speakers, nor that of any other participant at that meeting may be revealed. (b) It may not be divulged that the information was received at that meeting.

## **Meeting Summaries, Drafts, and Final Report**

The WFLC staff and Singleton Strategies LLC will be responsible for preparing summaries of the meetings with an eye toward capturing key issues, conclusions, and agreed-upon next steps. Members of the Drafting Committee will have the opportunity to review and comment on draft meeting summaries prior to their being considered final.

All report drafts will be shared with the WFLC staff and Drafting Committee members. WFLC staff will engage the WFLC Executive Board and membership for review and approval of the final report.

## **Enlibra Principles**

These principles, developed for and adopted by the Western Governors Association as a basis for their policy development work, may be helpful for the Drafting Committee as it seeks to satisfy the objectives of this report. Members are encouraged to use these principles as they formulate recommendations.

- National Standards, Neighborhood Solutions - Assign Responsibilities at the Right Level
- Collaboration, Not Polarization - Use Collaborative Processes to Break Down Barriers and Find Solutions
- Reward Results, Not Programs - Move to a Performance-Based System
- Science For Facts, Process for Priorities - Separate Subjective Choices from Objective Data Gathering
- Markets Before Mandates - Pursue Economic Incentives Whenever Appropriate
- Change A Heart, Change A Nation - Environmental Understanding is Crucial
- Recognition of Benefits and Costs - Make Sure All Decisions Affecting Infrastructure, Development and Environment are Fully Informed
- Solutions Transcend Political Boundaries - Use Appropriate Geographic Boundaries for Environmental Problems