EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Senate Bill 202 established the Task Force to evaluate and assess the need for independent science reviews in Oregon and make appropriate recommendations to the Governor and the legislature.

Institute for Natural Resources
OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY
15 September 2016

Independent Science Reviews for Natural Resources in the State of Oregon

SB202 Task Force for Independent Science Reviews for Natural Resources
Institute for Natural Resources

FINAL REPORT
for the Oregon State Legislature
SB202 Task Force
15 September 2016
Charge of the Task Force

- Assess the need for independent science review in Oregon
- Recommend one or more entities
- Recommend if legislative authority is needed
- Recommend structure and function of the process to be used
Task Force Members

Allison Aldous, Freshwater Scientist, The Nature Conservancy
Jennifer Allen, Associate Professor, Hatfield School of Government PSU
Adell Amos, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, School of Law, UO
Barbara Bond, Professor Emeritus, College of Forestry, OSU
Tim Deboodt, Associate Professor, College of Agricultural Sciences, OSU Extension
Dan Edge, Associate Dean, College of Agricultural Sciences, OSU
Linda George, Professor, School of the Environment, PSU
Sara Gray, Senior Corporate Counsel, Precision Castparts
Michael Harte, Professor, College of Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences, OS
Cassandra Moseley, Associate Vice President for Research, UO
Maryanne Reiter, Hydrologist, Weyerhaeuser
Mark Sytsma, Professor and Director Center for Lakes and Reservoirs, PSU
Jason Younker, Assistant Vice President and Advisor to the President on Sovereignty and Government-to-Government Relations, UO
Approach

• Task Force structure
  Selection, representation, support

• Process
  Meetings, framing the work

• Information gathering methods
  Literature review, interviews/questionnaire

• Outreach
  Promoting awareness, soliciting participation and input
Finding 1

Oregon’s natural resources agencies, legislators, and the public would benefit from ISR. However, for an ISR to benefit the state the reviews need to be appropriately focused, and carried out in a deliberate, transparent manner consistent with the findings in this report. In short, “how” a review is constructed and conducted is important to achieving the full potential benefit.
Findings 2 & 3

Most single-agency science reviews can be met with existing state, federal, and academic resources, but review practices and capacity for conducting reviews vary among agencies.

There is a need for independent science review of complex, multi-disciplinary issues in natural resources that span multiple agencies and are relevant to stakeholders and lawmakers, as well as managers. Existing resources are not adequate for these types of reviews.
ISR mechanisms and structures that are being used for natural resources policy in other states and at the federal level can inform a process for ISRs in Oregon, but the state’s need to reduce the potential risks of ISRs requires a tailored approach that draws on lessons learned from other ISR structures.
Recommendations 1 & 2

Create a robust, appropriately-resourced independent science review process for natural resources in Oregon that focuses on the most urgent need: complex, multi-disciplinary, and controversial issues.

Create a new entity, the Oregon ISR Board, and review-specific science panels that will be supported by an ISR Secretariat – the coordinating arm of the ISR that is hosted in an existing Oregon entity.
**Structure**

**Requesting Entities**
- Agencies
- Governor’s Office
- Legislature
- Public
- Stakeholders

**ISR Secretariat**
*The coordinating arm of Oregon’s ISR process*

**ISR Board**
*Providing scientific leadership and oversight of Oregon’s ISR process*

**ISR Panels**
*Review-specific science panels conducting the reviews*
Recommendations 3 & 4

Oregon’s independent science review process should have legislative authority.

Oregon’s ISR process for natural resources should primarily focus on complex, multi-agency, interdisciplinary science issues that are of importance to the State of Oregon. We recommend a cost-effective, useful, and nimble structure that will require sufficient base funding from the State in order to ensure integrity, transparency and inclusiveness.
Process

Topic/question submitted to Board and Secretariat by a requesting entity

Discuss scope, timing, and costs

Review topic selection

ISR approved; contracting starts

Defining the review

ISR Panel formation

Panel member selection

Panel's first meeting; requesting entity and public invited

ISR Panel work

Expected average study length will be one year

Secretariat and Panel Manager prepares background material, available to public

Information gathering sessions

External review of ISR product

Board and Panel sign off on report

Report review

Report release

Requesting entity given copy of final report and offered a briefing

Report released to public

Final point of requesting entity's input, aside from public comment and information gathering sessions

Public education to be conducted by Panel Manager and Secretariat
Oregon’s ISR Products

Deploying ISRs at different stages of the policy development or rule-making process could necessitate using different ISR products or services at different points.

• Informal or formal consultations or roundtable discussions
• Formally researched and written reviews or consensus reports
• Workshops, conferences, or symposia
• White papers or knowledge syntheses
• Develop best practices for scientific review in natural resource management in conjunction with agencies
Principles

• Cost effectiveness
• Integrity
• Usefulness
• Flexibility
• Inclusiveness and transparency
Funding Oregon’s ISR

Maintaining the capacity for ISRs by funding an ISR Secretariat

2.5 FTE (part-time Secretariat Director, full-time technical assistant, full-time program coordinator)

Funding the production of ISR reviews and reports

Panel Manager
Review-specific panelists
Key Points
Oregon Independent Science Review Process

• Rigor in question selection
  Transdisciplinary issues, likelihood of “high impact”, regional or state-wide relevance, future-oriented

• Transparent process

• Sufficient funds are available to conduct review—not a “pay-to-play” system
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SB202 Task Force for Independent Science Reviews for Natural Resources
Oregon State University

Institute for Natural Resources

16 September 2016

http://inr.oregonstate.edu/sb202/deliverables