



## Institute for Natural Resources

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### IRST Meeting Notes

**Date and Time:** 16 November 2023, 1:00-3:00 PM

**Link to Recording of the Meeting:** [https://media.oregonstate.edu/media/t/1\\_zkb0eple](https://media.oregonstate.edu/media/t/1_zkb0eple)

**Meeting Purpose:** High-level orientation to the work of the IRST

**Attendees:** *IRST Members:* Ellen Bishop, Kelly Burnett, Becky Flitcroft, Jessica Homyack, and Jeff Light  
*INR:* Lisa Gaines, Sean Gordon, Jeff Behan; *ODF:* Terry Frueh; *Guests:* David Bugni, AMPC member representing the Oregon Small Woodlands Association; Daniel Newton, Oregon Small Woodlands Association; Hans Berge; and, Mike Cartmill

#### To do

- [IRST] Return onboarding questionnaires by Dec 14
  - [INR] Collate & circulate results
- [IRST] State board training
- [INR] Schedule meeting times for January and February onward
- [INR] Provide documents related to the charter and best available science
  - [IRST] review documents and provide feedback
- [IRST] Send INR questions on public meetings/records to provide to Dept of Justice representative

#### Decisions

No decisions were made.

#### Highlights of Discussions

Please refer to the recording for the full meeting discussions and/or clarifications of the below highlights.

#### Overview of the Adaptive Management Program

Questions and comments based on the overview.

- If the IRST has questions about the AMPC's (Adaptive Management Program Committee) research question packet and how the IRST is interpreting the questions, then through the AMPC Coordinator, will we be able to have an open dialogue to make sure we get it right before we put any significant effort into our work? Yes.

- What is the 45-day timeline after the IRST formally receives a research question packet from the AMPC? The IRST has 45 days to let the AMPC know how long it'll take to develop the scoping proposal; it is not about completing the scoping proposal in that timeframe.
- Some of the AMPC's preliminary roads-based questions are not actually research questions and are not things that I would imagine developing a research project around. I understand that there's some time to negotiate with the AMPC about what the question is. Might it be useful for the IRST to provide some guidance to the AMPC about what a research question is? We've specifically termed them preliminary research questions knowing that they will be further honed by the IRST and turned into solid research questions. There is the intent of having back and forth communication between the IRST and the AMPC.
- Do you want us to be looking toward tools and products as elements of what could come out of some research? Often that is an additional piece.
- How does the AMPC arrive at their questions (maybe we should use "queries" if they are broader in scope than a specific scientific question)? What process does the AMPC use to arrive at questions or queries that they will be posing to the IRST? The first three topics were defined in the Private Forest Accord report and in rule, then it's based on the interests of the AMPC.

### **Oregon Public Meetings & Records Laws**

- Regarding serial quorum, does that mean that all of our deliberations and discussions should only occur in public meetings where a notice of the meeting happening has been posted? That's correct. Now there are a few exceptions; for instance, an executive session. Then there are good practices. If an IRST member reviews a document, comments go directly and only to INR, who will then take those comments to draft a document that will be discussed in a public meeting for public record.
- I understand public records and public meetings are there for transparency and so that the public can see how we arrive at the decisions we make. But in the work we do outside the IRST meetings, could an IRST member talk to a consultant or an expert on a particular topic and bring that back to the group for the IRST to work on in our deliberations? Is that something that is a free reign, or is it also constrained by these laws? We will need to defer to the Department of Justice to answer this question.

### **Timeline & Deliverables**

- Will the IRST receive the research question packet(s) after we develop our charter at the end of January? It depends on when the AMPC formally sends it to us. But, it is the hope that that will happen after January 31<sup>st</sup>. The AMPC has been meeting for over 6 months, and we are only beginning our work.
- What exactly is a "research scoping proposal"? We can talk with the AMPC to help us define what they are interested in in terms of a research scoping proposal. With a research RFP, the folks responding to the topic or question would provide their proposal and budget, not the group developing the RFP.

### **Defining "best available science" (BAS): initial list of concepts & resources**

- Given that the Adaptive Management Program is primarily in service of the implementation of the habitat conservation plan that does along with the Private Forest Accord, targeting publications that

have addressed best available science in the context of the ESA would be probably be the most helpful and consistent with the mission of the Adaptive Management Program.

- Is there guidance to include other forms of knowing, traditional ecological knowledge (for example) and how it fits into best available science? There is no guidance on this in the rules but it is something that the IRST could address in their definition of BAS.
- “Best available science” is thrown around quite a bit, used often, and may not be inspected a lot. My question to our group is when do we apply this standard and at what level of detail?
- The rules say that the IRST shall develop standards for best available science. Is this supposed to be something that we provide to the science team(s) responding to the RFPs or is this something we're supposed to be inherently applying in the creation of different sorts of research? Is this a stand-alone? Are we going to define best available science and then move on? Do we use that definition in some ongoing way?
- Are we applying the best available science standards when we are writing the RFP, or are we applying the best available science standards when a study comes in to us and we review it, or is it both?
- The rules seem to suggest that scientific best practices be applied throughout the IRST's work, with some examples being developing scoping proposals, RFPs, selecting RFP winners, and communicating results. The goal is to deliver best available science to the AMPC so that they can deliver it to the Board of Forestry to make decisions. So, the definition of best available science could be thought of like a contract. The AMPC and the Board of Forestry know these are the criteria used for the products that we're delivering to them.
- How does best available science apply to the IRST task of generating new science? What we need to do is determine what best practices are for science to deliver best available science. Part of our job is determining what those best practices are, and putting that down in a contract so folks know that they're receiving best available science for decision making.