

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Public Testimony](#)
Cc: [Chad Woodward](#); [Bob Kaplan](#); [REDACTED]
Subject: Public Testimony - Ashland City Council (4/18/2023)
Date: Friday, April 14, 2023 8:49:43 PM

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Climate Change Adaption - Ashland Forest Plan

Mayor Graham and Council,

I provided the following comments, on 9/27/2023, regarding an earlier draft of the Addendum:

“While the current draft of the Climate Change Addendum addresses strategies to prepare for and become more resilient to climate change, it does not address how the AFP will achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. In order to address the later the AFP Addendum should include, at a minimum, the following:

- Quantification of GHG emissions from forest practices including climate impacts directly related to carbon black. (NOTE to editor: please include a definition of carbon black and its impact on climate and human health).
- Identification of GHG emission offsets for AFP land management activities that could serve to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.”

The updated draft does not provide this information. Instead it includes the following statement in an apparent response to my original comment.

“Though the Ashland Climate Energy Action Plan calls for carbon neutrality, we recognize that this may not be possible on City forestlands, where goals of community wildfire safety and maintaining forested ecosystems intact are higher priorities.”

It is critical that the Climate Change Addendum quantify AFP greenhouse gas emissions and the extent of carbon sequestration. These details are needed to understand the extent of additional emission reductions that the city must achieve, or off-sets it must implement to achieve the CEAP’s goals.

Thanks you,
Gary Shaff
[REDACTED]

Climate Change - Charisse Sydorak
Addendum AFP
4/18/22

April 18, 2023

To: Ashland City Council and City Manager

Subject: Proposed Climate Change Addendum to the Ashland Forest Plan

From: Southern Oregon Climate-Smart Working Group (SOCS)

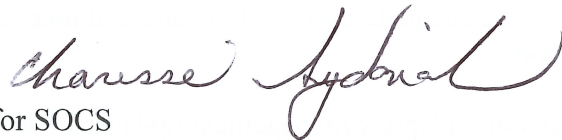
I am a resident of Ashland and I represent the Southern Oregon Climate-Smart Working Group (SOCS). SOCS reviewed the draft addendum and provided comments on November 12, 2022. Since many of our comments were not clearly addressed in the proposed Addendum we are resubmitting comments for Council consideration and adding a question about the relationship to the Climate and Energy Action Plan (CEAP).

- 1) The proposed addendum provides no specifics on when, where, why, or how the proposed “adaptative management” activities will take place. A “shopping list” of *strategic* intentions over a 25-year period is hard to envisage. Which items on the list have a higher priority for action and why? A timeline and framework for action is critical to enable public engagement as the projects are developed and implemented.
- 2) Where are fire and other types of “refugia” on the City’s forested lands? The decision to define some management areas as “refugia” should be explained and scientifically justified. May we assume that this will be accomplished in an updated Forest Plan? If so, when can we expect the update?
- 3) Provide maps and other graphics to show areas of concern for each resource management objective. After nearly two decades of active management, it would be useful to understand which objectives are not likely to be met because of climatic change, and to see where the problems areas are located. (Unfortunately, the “Ashland Forest Plan Map Package” link posted on the City website does not work.) Please make this information publicly accessible and provide adequate time to study and comment on the information before taking decisive action.
- 4) The final example of “necessary adaptive management updates...” is coordinating with various entities including the USFS. Since climate change adaptation options are limited on the ~1,200 acres of City owned forest lands, this is a critical need. We encourage the City to move forward with coordinated action as soon as practical.
- 5) While a significant amount of public engagement occurred nearly 20 years ago, the demographics of the City have likely shifted. It might be imprudent to assume that tree removal is widely supported as the best option especially since harvesting of green trees is being considered as a preventative management action. The recent thinning project on private forest lands adjacent to City managed forest lands has generated a lot of public concern and interest. We suggest that a comprehensive public education strategy be developed along with more diverse opportunities for input before significant tree removal is undertaken.

- 6) The relationship between the Ashland CEAP and 2016 Forest Plan goals and objectives is not clear. Is the CEAP natural resources strategy: “NS-1-1. Manage forests to retain biodiversity, resilience, and ecosystem function and services in the face of climate change” the only connected action? If not, what are the connected actions and how will they be coordinated? What about the following strategies listed in the CEAP:
- NS-1-2. Use green infrastructure such as bioswales, permeable pavement, other pervious surfaces to reduce flood risk and minimize sediment entry into creeks from trails and roads.
 - NS-1-3. Undertake restoration efforts to retain and restore native fish and riparian species.
 - NS-1-4. Map and protect areas that provide ecosystem services.
- 7) We applaud the authors for recognizing that “the restoration paradigm that guided previous forest planning and management” is no longer realistic, and that a strategy that uses “new science and technology to effectively address climate change-induced forest land conditions” is necessary. Instead of alluding to using this “new science and technology for adaptive management,” it would be more appropriate to demonstrate how it works and the associated assumptions and implications. The “climate smart”¹ adaptation approach is one of several involving critical review of goals and tactics at a suitable scale to assess and prepare for uncertain future conditions. It involves scenario planning, deliberate experimentation, and ideally incorporates assessment of the carbon flux impacts with efforts to minimize emissions. We recommend that the proposed Addendum be revised to contain more detail about how the “necessary adaptive management updates in planning and management actions” will be actualized.

In closing, I would like to suggest that Council consider posting all management advisory committee meeting times and dates on the City Calendar. Since decommissioning I have been unable to find out when and where the Forest Lands Committee meets each month. I attempted to go to a “regularly” scheduled session in January but there was no one there.

Respectfully,



Charisse Sydoriak for SOCS

¹ Glick, P., B.A. Stein, and K.R. Hall. 2021. Toward a Shared Understanding of Climate-Smart Restoration on America’s National Forests: A Science Review and Synthesis. Washington, DC: National Wildlife Federation. <https://www.nwf.org/ClimateSmartRestoration>

Stein, B.A., P. Glick, N. Edelson, and A. Staudt (eds.) (2014). Climate-Smart Conservation: Putting Adaptation Principles into Practice. National Wildlife Federation, Washington, D.C.

<https://www.nwf.org/ClimateSmartGuide>

Swanston, Christopher W.; Janowiak, Maria K.; Brandt, Leslie A.; Butler, Patricia R.; Handler, Stephen D.; Shannon, P. Danielle; Derby Lewis, Abigail; Hall, Kimberly; Fahey, Robert T.; Scott, Lydia; Kerber, Angela; Miesbauer, Jason W.; Darling, Lindsay; Parker, Linda; St. Pierre, Matt. 2016. Forest Adaptation Resources: climate change tools and approaches for land managers, 2nd ed. Gen. Tech. Rep. NRS-GTR-87-2. Newtown Square, PA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northern Research Station. 161 p. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2737/NRS-GTR-87-2>