

September 8, 2014

To FBRI Supporting Organizations:

The Board of Directors met on June 2 and 3 in Philomath, Oregon. We spent the first day in the woods visiting a series of Nelder plots that Dr. Mike Newton established on Starker Forests timberland 35 years ago. On the second day we held what I would call a “standard” Board meeting at Starker Forests’ office in Philomath. I have attached our agenda (see Attachment A) so you can see for yourself what we discussed on those two days. Before I go any further, however, I have to thank a bunch of people. First, I want to thank Dr. Newton and Elizabeth Cole for taking us out to see the Alsea Nelder plots. It’s an amazing set of research plots and if you ever get a chance to visit this site with Mike and Elizabeth—just do it. I also want to thank Bond and Barte Starker for hosting the woods tour on June 2 and making their conference room available to us on June 3 for our Board meeting. I really appreciate all that they did to make our two days in Philomath enjoyable, intellectually rewarding, and productive.

As I mentioned above, the Dr. Newton’s Alsea Nelder plots are truly amazing. It’s so easy to see the effects of density on the trees! Mike and Elizabeth have carefully remeasured the trees over the years, and as a result they can produce charts that show how trees planted at different densities develop with respect to height, diameter, and volume. It’s really cool to stand on the edge of one of these Nelders, look towards the center of the plot, and see the density effects (see Figure 1).



Figure 1—Looking toward the center of a Nelder plot between two “spokes”. When you’re out there walking around inspecting these trees, it’s easy to see the impact of density on tree diameters.

The data from these Nelder plots have been provided to Dr. Arney and will be used to calibrate FPS Version 7 libraries. Jim is convinced that Nelder plot designs are ideal for obtaining FPS calibration data. It's a very efficient design for studying the effects of density on individual trees. Jim has been recommending the installation of such plots to FBRI Supporting Organizations who desire site-specific growth data for their timberlands. If you're interested in learning more about Nelder plots, give Jim a call. I know that several Supporting Organizations, including Lone Rock Timber, are in the process of installing such plots on their timberlands.

The day after the woods tour the Board of Directors met at Starker Forests' office in Philomath for a Board meeting. In this letter I do not intend to provide you with a summary of the entire meeting. Rather, I want to focus on a few items that I believe are noteworthy. If you have any questions about something you see on the agenda and it's not covered below, please contact Jim, me, or one of the other FBRI Directors. See Attachment B for contact information.

Several Supporting Organizations have requested office visits this year. Our policy is that Supporting Organizations are entitled to a one-day office visit each year.¹ We are getting lots of positive feedback from organizations that take advantage of this benefit. Both Jim and Chuck make such visits. I would encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity. It's a very effective way to obtain FPS training, and to get answers to a wide array of questions that you might have regarding forest inventory, growth and yield, and forest planning.

Dr. Arney is continuing to release updates to FPS Version 7. The last update I saw was for Version 7.31 which Jim sent out to Supporting Organizations on August 25, 2014. I'd like to thank those individuals who have contacted Jim and told him about problems with earlier versions of the program. It's important to get FPS Version 7 "stabilized" as we do not intend to support FPS Version 6 beyond December 31, 2014. Jim is also spending a lot of time working on the FPS Version 7 library calibration methods and tools. Draft versions of the Tree Record System (TRS) software and documentation have been distributed to a limited number of biometricians who are using this information to calibrate proprietary libraries.² Jim will get feedback from these individuals as they use the tutorial and associated software over the course of the year. Jim plans to prepare final versions of the software tools and tutorial which will be distributed to Supporting Organizations at the Annual Meeting on Tuesday, November 11, at the World Forestry Center in Portland.

Dr. Arney is also planning to distribute updated FPS libraries at the Annual Meeting. These updated libraries are based on his new continuous approach to library development which he formally proposed to the Board back in December 2012, and presented to Supporting Organizations at a workshop in January 2013. In the past, FPS relied upon regional species libraries for inputs to the model.

¹ To arrange for a one-day site visit, contact Jim or Chuck. Supporting Organizations are asked to reimburse FBRI for hotel and travel costs.

² One such library calibration project is being entirely funded by Green Diamond Resource Company. They hired a consulting biometrician to analyze their FPS permanent plot data and develop a proprietary library for their redwood and Douglas-fir coastal timberlands in California.

This resulted in a large number of libraries that were often separated by political boundaries. There are several benefits to his new approach:

- ✓ Past discrete FPS regions will be merged
- ✓ Logical and biological trends will be strengthened
- ✓ Limited datasets will be combined

I must admit that I am very enthusiastic about the continuous approach to library development. Jim has come up with some astonishing results when he looks at data that cover broad geographical regions. I am really looking forward to his presentation at the Annual Meeting.

We are making final preparations for the SAF National Convention/IUFRO World Congress that will be held in Salt Lake City later this year in mid-October. The theme of the congress is “Sustaining Forests, Sustaining People: The Role of Research.” Dr. Arney will be giving three presentations and FBRI will have a booth in the exhibit hall. I am looking forward to the convention and helping Jim promote our Institute and software. My hope is that such exposure will lead to new members, university involvement, more interest, and ultimately, a stronger institute that will stand the test of time and continue to provide the forestry community with the tools it needs to make difficult resource decisions long into the future.

The Board is continuing to make progress on succession planning. I am pleased to report that we are going to have a special Board meeting in Portland on Monday, September 15, dedicated to strategic planning. I am truly looking forward to this special meeting. The Board needs to define what the FBRI will look like in the future when Jim is in retirement and is only available on a limited basis. Who is going to assume the role of President and provide day-to-day leadership? Who is going to conduct FPS workshops? Who is going to make corrections to the FPS source code as bugs are identified and need to be fixed? Who is going to market and promote FPS to potential Supporting Organizations? Who is going to be our biometrician? Who is going to make site visits to Supporting Organizations? Over what time period will these transitions take place? These are all good questions that need to be discussed, debated, and answered. I plan to take detailed notes which I will share with Supporting Organizations at our Annual Meeting in November.

Speaking of the Annual Meeting, it is a great venue for you to network with resource professionals that rely on FPS for forest inventory, growth and yield, and forest planning. It also provides you with an opportunity to discuss issues that are relevant to your organization with one or more of the Institute’s Directors. But, most importantly, this is the place to learn first-hand from Dr. Arney what the Institute has accomplished during the year, and what the work plan looks like going forward. Additionally, there are not many opportunities to interact with Jim now that FBRI is only conducting one comprehensive FPS workshop per year, and so you should put the Annual Meeting in your calendar today. If you want more information about the meeting, here’s the link:

<http://www.forestbiometrics.com/board-of-directors/november-11-2014/>

If you want to register for the Annual Meeting, contact Richard Zabel at richard@westernforestry.org. A notice will also be distributed to FBRI Supporting Organizations as we get closer to the meeting.

Thank you for your continued support of FBRI. We have a very enthusiastic and professional user community, and I am hoping that you'll take my advice and put the November 11 Annual Meeting on your calendars today. Your active participation in the Institute is critical to our direction and success. Show up and let us know what's on your mind. If for some reason you cannot attend the November 11 meeting, contact Jim, me, or anyone on the Board of Directors and tell us about your concerns.

Best regards,

Dan Opalach

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Attachment A

Forest Biometrics Research Institute (FBRI) – Board of Directors

Board of Directors Meeting Agenda – June 02-03, 2014

Starker Forests Board Room

Corvallis, Oregon

Agenda – June 02, 2014 Scheduled 10:00am – 5:00pm Starker Forests

Field tour of Alsea Nelder Plots – hosted by Mike Newton and Liz Cole

Agenda – June 03, 2014 Scheduled 8:00am – 12:00noon Starker Boardroom

Call to Order 8:00am Dan Opalach

Minutes from previous meeting – Review and Approval

Financial Status – Profit & Loss Statements through April 30, 2014 – Richard Zabel

Technical Support Updates – Chuck Vopicka

Biometrics Support Updates – Jim Arney

Office visits – Reviews and Participation in client management actions

SE Alaska FPS Regional Library – 2014 Update

Northern California Proprietary FPS Library – 2014 Update

University programs – FBRI-FPS Methods and Tools integration

Activities for June 3 – November 11, 2014

SAF – CIF – IUFRO World Congress – Salt Lake City, October 5 – 11, 2014

Intertribal Timber Conference – Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, June 23 – 25, 2014

Close of Missoula FBRI Technical Support Office – June 30, 2014

FPS Regional Library updates to distribute at Annual Meeting, November 11

- Completion and Distribution of TRS – FPS Library Calibration Methods
- Documentation of FPS “Response Surface Mosaic” Research Trials
- Documentation of FPS software architecture and maintenance utilities

Internal FBRI Support Services

Website Management and Updates

File Servers – Software, FPS-Regional Libraries, Databases

External FBRI Support Services

Assistance in field inventory, silviculture and planning methods

Staffing levels and Essential Skill Sets

Assistance in field research trials – installation, maintenance & analysis

Nelder plot installations, Response Surface Mosaic installations

Felled-tree methods and analyses for site and taper

Next FBRI Board meeting – November 10, 2014

Close of Meeting Noon (target) – Lunch on-site by Starker Forests

Attachment B

FBRI Contact Information

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
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Dr. Dan Opalach	Director/Chairman	(707) 668-4418	dopalach@greendiamond.com
Mr. Rob Taylor	Director	(936) 829-6375	rmtaylor@campbellgroup.com
Mr. Marc Vomocil	Director	(541) 929-2477	marc@starkerforests.com
Mr. Chuck Vopicka	Technical Support	(406) 541-0054	support@forestbiometrics.com
Mr. Richard Zabel	Secretary/Treasurer	(503) 226-4562	richard@westernforestry.org