

Oregon OSHA
Forest Activities Advisory Council
March 13, 2025
9:00 am – noon
Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Betsy Earls, Bryon Snapp, David Grim, David O'Neill, Denise Dethlefs, Jim Gahlsdorf, John Garland, Larry Fipps, Larry Kirkpatrick, Mark Dvorscak, Matt Kaiser, Mike Spear, Rachel Madijilesi, Rod Huffman, Steve Aulerich, Steve Pilkerton, Teresa Lundy, Tom Bozicevic, Wayne Oja

Meeting Agenda:

- Introductions
 - Approve September 2024 meeting minutes
 - OR-OSHA strategic planning and other updates
 - Synthetic rope presentation (Gannet Nets)
 - Slip-on caulks
 - OR-OSHA list of Division 7 rulemaking recommendations
 - 2024 list of forest activities hospitalizations and fatalities
 - Quarterly Overnight Hospitalizations & Fatalities Report (see below)
 - Roundtable (time permitting)
-

- **Introductions were conducted.**
- **September 2024 meeting minutes were approved.**
- **OR-OSHA strategic planning and other updates**
 - Lori Chaves-DeRemer has been confirmed as U.S Labor Secretary
 - David Keeling has been nominated to be the next Administrator of Federal OSHA, pending approval.
 - New Executive Order (EO): Eliminating 10 regulations for each new regulation issued. This EO may affect currently proposed federal OSHA rulemaking.
 - Federal OSHA's comment period for their proposed Emergency Responder Standard closed on Jan. 17, 2025. They have indicated they will be reviewing the comments received until June 2025.
 - Recent rulemaking activities include new rules for labor housing that apply to temporary worker housing across industries, minor corrections and penalty updates based on the price index. Oregon OSHA is waiting on Federal OSHA to finalize changes to hazard communication rules before updating Oregon's rules. There is uncertainty around how potential new Federal OSHA regulations, like

the emergency responder standard, may proceed given recent changes in leadership and executive orders.

- **Synthetic rope presentation (Gannet Nets)**

- The presentation discussed the benefits of synthetic ropes in logging, including weight savings, reduced manual workload, and fire suppression. They also highlighted the advancements in synthetic rope technology, such as braided structures for increased abrasion resistance. Associated emphasized the importance of certification and testing for their products, and shared their experiences with various manufacturers. They also discussed the potential for synthetic ropes in logging applications, including synthetic end connectors and blocks. The team expressed interest in exploring the use of synthetic ropes in logging, and the presenters offered to provide further information and support.
- The group discusses the potential for using research variances to evaluate synthetic materials in logging, as well as the limitations of current grant programs for this type of research. They explore options for funding, including Oregon OSHA's grant program, which offers up to \$40,000 for developing educational materials. However, the committee notes that this amount may be insufficient for substantial research and that the program's structure limits its applicability to product development. They consider the need to update the grant amount, which has remained unchanged for decades, and discuss exploring other funding sources, such as those available in Washington State.
- The discussion revolved around the use of synthetic end connectors, including their use in crane rigging, with concerns raised about their safety and compliance with regulations. The participants debated the appropriateness of using synthetic end connectors in certain situations, with one participant suggesting that they could be used if they met specific safety standards. The importance of proper manufacturing and certification of these synthetic end connectors was emphasized, with the need for them to meet specific breaking strength requirements. The discussion also touched on the potential legal implications of using non-compliant equipment, with the need for adequate insurance coverage highlighted. The conversation ended with a call for the use of certified and compliant equipment to ensure safety and avoid potential legal issues.
- The group discusses safety standards for logging equipment, focusing on the discrepancy between the 5:1 safe working load for hardware and the 3:1 standard for lines. They explore potential reasons for this difference, including historical industry standards and equipment longevity. The conversation then shifted back to synthetic end connectors, with a suggestion to test their reliability through repeated cycling. A member pointed out that oversized lines and fuse links can act as safety measures. The discussion concludes with a mention of recommendations for future rulemaking, including a proposal that all logging site equipment must meet a 3:1 safety standard.

- **Slip-on caulks**

- The group discusses the use of slip-on traction devices as potential alternatives to cork boots for temporary or incidental use in logging operations. They examine various examples and debate whether these devices meet safety requirements. The discussion focuses on the definition of "equivalent" protection, concerns about proper fit and effectiveness, and potential risks of using such devices. The group decides to make this an action item for further discussion with managers to determine if these devices could be appropriate for incidental use. They also note the importance of clear guidelines to prevent misuse and ensure safety.
- Action item: Research and provide response regarding acceptable criteria for incidental use of slip-on spikes at the next meeting.

Response added for 6/12/2025 meeting: Per foot protection requirements under 437-007-0330(3), "Personnel whose duties require them to walk on trees, logs or boomsticks, must wear sharp caulked boots, or the equivalent." As such, the use of effective secure slip-on spikes may be used by personnel whose duties normally do not require them to walk on trees or logs, for unforeseeable situations. Such incidental use of slip-on spikes must be used over heavy-duty type work boots that provide ankle support as required by 437-007-0330(1).

- **OR-OSHA list of Division 7 rulemaking recommendations**

The group reviewed and discussed a list of recommendations for rulemaking. The group also discussed the need for clarification on certain items on the list and the possibility of adding new items.

- **2024 list of forest activities hospitalizations and fatalities**

A list of hospitalizations and fatalities for 2024 calendar year was shared to the group.

- **Quarterly Overnight Hospitalizations & Fatalities Report**

There was a discussion about the reporting requirements for hospitalizations and fatalities, and a mention of an unfortunate incident involving a young man in a logging operation.

- **Roundtable (time permitting)**

OHSU's Oregon Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (OR-FACE) Program has finished developing the English version of the Oregon Yarding and Loading Interactive Safety Training. Tom will send a link to the group

Next meeting scheduled June 12, 2025