

Oregon OSHA
Forest Activities Advisory Council
September 11, 2025 Minutes
9:00 am – noon
AOL Salem Office, Zoom meeting

Attendees: Bryon Snapp, Dave Boyd, David Grim, Denise Dethlefs, Gage Kronberger, Jennifer Stewart, Jim Gahlsdorf, John Garland, John Meyers, Kate Ryan, Larry Fipps, Mark Dvorscak, Mark Standley Jr., Mike Spear, Tim Ruyle, Tom Bozicevic, Wayne Oja

Meeting Agenda:

- Introductions
- Approve June 2025 meeting minutes
- Oregon OSHA updates
- Tethered logging research variance update
- Suggestions for YouTube podcast training topics (Dr. John J. Garland)
- Quarterly Overnight Hospitalizations & Fatalities Report (see below)
- Roundtable (time permitting)

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- Introductions were conducted.
 - June 2025 meeting minutes were approved with no changes.
 - **Oregon OSHA updates**
 - **Rulemaking**
 - There were roughly 26 federal rulemaking actions proposed July 1 that were proposed to be repealed or modified by federal OSHA. Open comment period ends November 1. See more information on [Oregon OSHA rulemaking](#).
 - Limit general duty clause – “OSHA proposes to clarify its interpretation of the General Duty Clause, 29 U.S.C. 654(a)(1), to exclude from enforcement known hazards that are inherent and inseparable from the core nature of a professional activity or performance.” An example was working with animals. We are hoping to get more information on what this applies to.
Q. What is the criteria they are giving for this for industry?
A. None provided so far.
 - Questions?
Q. Is the rule on repeat offenses on the list?
A. No, that is an Oregon rule, not federal.
 - **Website changeover**

The platform that supports the current [Oregon OSHA website](#) is being updated to a new version. Oregon OSHA website will be frozen beginning September 12 and is expected to conclude by October 7, with no updates able to be made during that time. All parts of the website will still work during the freeze. Bookmarks may change for users. Rule information will all be together as a future goal.

We are also working with a new law for ADA compliance (updated standards for government entities on all digital content provided to the public) with a deadline of April 2026. ADA principles are that information, user interface, navigation, operation, and content must be perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust. All PDFs except codebooks will shift to HTML process – Many will become webpages instead of only PDFs. We are not getting rid of PDFs; they will still be linked and printable. This change will allow us to make updates more quickly.

- **Administrative Office temporary relocation**

L&I building will be vacated for remodeling in the early part of 2026 through early 2029. Oregon OSHA will relocate to the Revenue building, 4 and 5th floors. The Revenue building will have increased security.

- New Oregon OSHA Technical Manager will start later September.

- **Tethered logging research variance update**

- Research variance is not needed if not exceeding the slope limit for the machine they are operating, unless the manufacturer of the machine specifies you can go over the limit. If granted, an interim variance is given, and the public is allowed to have the option to request a public hearing to discuss the variance. There is a 20-day waiting period.

- Q. How many have ceased variance?

- A. Three so far.

- Q. How long are we continuing with the research variance process?

- A. We are waiting to see what is done with tethered logging from ODF rulemaking.

- Member: Studies have shown very little soil impact with the use of these machines. Request for Oregon OSHA to suggest movement on this topic to ODF.

- A. Knowing a limit on the slope would be useful. We want to keep it a partnership. Some systems will use the equipment on ground that does not require a variance and they may not report those hours. Does not distinguish between harvesting or fire protection use. State of Washington does not have the steep slope rule that Oregon has that prompts these variances that Oregon has.

- Members would like a discussion on how to learn/develop a formal roadmap for how to cease the variance program.

- A. As long as it remains in Oregon OSHA rule, it has to remain. Rule would need to be changed. We don't want to conflict with another rule in the state (another agency). It is natural for ODF to initiate and Oregon OSHA follows.

- Member: Safety should take precedence.

- A. Once ODF does their part, then Oregon OSHA's next steps would be opening part of the DIV 7 rules. Scope would be reviewed. Question to consider, would this be comprehensive or specific? Tethered logging would be a priority.
- Q. What is done if a company has two different systems?
- A. Only one aware of it is on this list. Both are listed on the variance.
- Member: 130k hours with no accidents should show that the rule is not needed.
- A. 50% was set in rule and until manufacturer comes out with a different number, then the variance is needed. Variance requires that provisions are listed to be allowed to go over 50%. Provisions came from best management practices. A new rule would have to include all of the elements of the variance (*When* you go over 50% these provisions must be in place....). Stakeholders can petition Oregon OSHA to engage in rulemaking.

- **YouTube podcast training topics (Dr. John J. Garland)**

Wanting to know if this is worth pursuing grant money to make training videos. These type of training videos could be good idea to start a safety meeting.

- Topic examples:
 - Always be in the position of knowing what hazards are around you in the woods, have a better place to be. Always have a hole.
 - Self supervision. Would you tell someone else to do what you are doing or about to do? What makes you think you can defy the odds?
 - How to motivate others in the industry? Consequences for rewarding the wrong thing and punishing the right thing.
 - Fatigue in the woods
 - Loggers are teachers. Teach like we would want to learn. Distinguish between facts, knowledge, etc.

Storytelling is a great concept for teaching others that they will retain.

- **Quarterly Overnight Hospitalizations & Fatalities Report**

- Two fatalities and three hospitalizations were reviewed.

- **Roundtable**

- Member: Regarding hard hats, there is a focus on increased safety materials and on education. Better method than traditional hard hats. Construction industry is going more with the helmet style. Suspension would give way on the older hard hats.
- Member: We work mostly with tower logging. There is a need to consider age of timber and tying these machines down. Timber is younger and softer now. In one situation, one of the guylines sucked up quickly, pinched outside guyline off, and tower flipped over. Experience opened our eyes to what the younger timber is like. This was solved by using 1 1/8" guyline

for machines and bigger guyline tag around the stumps. We need to ask, how do we tie these trees down and how do we keep people safe?

Need to look at options. Put on live loads and do some tests. Take a hard look at this technology to learn how these products work. A member gave an example of wanting to buy new equipment and had asked OSHA to come observe (no human under the machine), but they were told no. Member felt there is a need to embrace new technology or other companies may do it on their own anyway.

- Member: Mention of previous discussion on synthetic rope connectors. Information may have been missing at the time that was not known (had been tested for military). Variance should not have been requested for something that is not covered by a rule. The strength capacity should be looked at as meeting the rule. New products like synthetic chains are coming out and are being used in other industries.

Look at unit design and layout. How is this unit set up that we are having problems with? Logger Excel PC program helps calculate allowable payload. Want to show how synthetic rope factors in – can it be safer and more efficient?

Q. If variance is denied, can it be tweaked and resubmitted?

A. Yes, employers may resubmit variance requests if they have additional information for consideration.

Member comments:

- It is a connector not a shackle, so variance should not be needed. Since there was no steel shackle, there should be no need for a variance.
- We need to replace a safety shackle with a synthetic connector. Is that what needs to be clarified in a request submittal?
- If it is thought that the new technology broke the rule, there is no rule on a synthetic connectors, only on steel shackles which this is not.
- Code says guylines need to meet the strength requirements of steel.
- Employer representatives may send their questions to Oregon OSHA for review.

Next meeting: December 11, 2025

Meeting adjourned