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May 4, 2009

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OFFICE OF THE DEAN -  
COLLEGE OF FOREST RESOURCES

Mark A. Emmert  
President  
University of Washington


Subject: Report of the College of Forest Resources Reorganization, Consolidation, and Elimination of Programs Review Committee

Dear President Emmert:

On April 2, 2009, the Chair of the Faculty Senate appointed a Review Committee pursuant to Chapter 26-41 C of the *Faculty Code* to review the Provost's proposal to convert the College of Forest Resources into the School of Forest Resources and assign the school to the College of the Environment. The committee has reviewed the relevant documents and met with the leadership of both the College of Forest Resources and the College of the Environment as well as faculty, students, staff, alumni, and Visiting Committee members from the College of Forest Resources. After careful assessment of the information provided and the concerns expressed, the Review Committee unanimously concludes that the Provost's proposal should be implemented as documented in the enclosed report.

The Review Committee has two major concerns regarding the implementation of the proposed reorganization. The first is the selection of the interim director for the School of Forest Resources. Implementing the transition from a college to a school will require an experienced leader who is able inspire the faculty, students, and staff to work collectively to make the transition a success. The school director will also need to work closely with external stakeholders, such as the alumni and professional organizations, to ensure that the organizational change does not appear as a reduced emphasis on Forest Resources education or research by the University. The second concern is the retention of existing resources as the college transitions to a school. The Provost will need to work with the Interim Dean of the College of the Environment to ensure that existing resources are retained by the school.

Sincerely,

  
John Schaufelberger  
Professor, Construction Management  
Chair, CFR RCEP Review Committee

Enclosure

cc: Provost Phyllis M. Wise  
Faculty Senate Chair David Lovell  
Secretary of the Faculty Marcia Killican  
✓ Dean Bruce Bare  
Interim Dean Dennis Hartmann

# Report of the College of Forest Resources Reorganization, Consolidation, and Elimination of Programs Review Committee

## Review Committee:

John Schaufelberger, Construction Management, Chair

Kurt Johnson, Rehabilitation Medicine

Lillian C. McDermott, Physics

Robert Plotnick, Evans School of Public Affairs

William Talbott, Philosophy

Theresa Barker, GPSS Representative

Phuong Nguyen, ASUW Representative

## Introduction

On April 2, 2009, the Chair of the Faculty Senate appointed a Review Committee pursuant to Chapter 26-41 C of the *Faculty Code* to review the Provost's proposal to convert the College of Forest Resources into the School of Forest Resources and to assign the school to the College of the Environment. In order to understand the background and issues associated with the proposal, the committee

- reviewed the documents listed in the Appendix,
- met with the Dean and the Faculty Chair of the College of Forest Resources,
- met with the Interim Dean of the College of the Environment,
- conducted four meetings with groups of faculty and staff from the College of Forest Resources,
- met with members of the College of Forest Resources Alumni Association,
- met with members of the College of Forest Resources Visiting Committee,
- conducted a public meeting at which stakeholders were invited to present their views relative to the proposed reorganization, and
- established a web site to allow interested stakeholders to submit written statements of their opinions regarding the proposed reorganization.

This report is based on analysis of the information collected by the Review Committee.

## Process

In June 2007, the Provost hosted a charrette with representatives from industry, government, UW leadership, and faculty to discuss the potential for establishing a College of the Environment. During the Autumn Quarter 2007, she met with over 125 faculty in small groups to discuss the concept and found strong support. After the discussions were completed, she organized the following three faculty working groups to address issues associated with organizing a College of the Environment:

- Vision Working Group (composed of 16 UW faculty)
- Organization and Structure Working Group (composed of 47 UW faculty)
- Education and Learning Goals Working Group (composed of 37 UW faculty)

In its report to the Provost in January 2008, the Organization and Structure Working Group recommended a set of academic units that should be moved into the College of the Environment which included the College of Forest Resources.

In June 2008, the proposal to establish a College of the Environment including Forest Resources was presented to the Board of Regents, which was approved, and an Interim Dean for the College was appointed. In October 2008, a Vision and Governance Committee was established by the Interim Dean to review the proposal that was submitted to the Board of Regents and recommend changes and additional recommendations for the College of the Environment. In November 2008, the College of Forest Resources faculty took an advisory vote and voted 61% in favor of joining the College of the Environment, 33% voting against joining, and 6% abstentions.

On February 9, 2009, the Provost presented her proposal to consolidate the College of Forest Resources into the College of the Environment to the Senate Committee on Planning and Budgeting. Her proposal was based on academic and research priorities and not budgetary restructuring. The Senate Committee on Planning and Budgeting passed a resolution concurring with the Provost's proposal.

On April 2, 2009, Class C Bulletin No. 479 was issued by the Faculty Senate to all faculty announcing the Provost's proposal to transition the College of Forest Resources into the School of Forest Resources within the College of the Environment.

## **Alternatives**

Section 26-41 C 2 of the *Faculty Code* indicates that the Provost's justification for the proposed action shall "review alternatives and explain why elimination of the college or school is preferable." Since no alternatives were provided, the Review Committee decided to develop its own set of alternatives to the proposed action. The three alternatives selected were:

- (1) Do nothing and leave the College of Forest Resources as it is today.
- (2) Rename the College of Forest Resources the College of the Environment and assign other academic units to it.
- (3) Convert the College of Forest Resources into a School of Forest Resources within the College of the Environment.

The University's stated goal in creating the College of the Environment is to bring together a critical mass of the academic units that are involved in environmental research and education into a single organization while imbedding a central institute to foster innovative collaboration and partnerships from the beginning of the research design process. Since forests comprise a significant part of the natural environment both in the Northwest and globally, it is hard to imagine the **Forest Resources** faculty not being a part of the new college. Forest resources research and education have transitioned from an agricultural perspective to an ecosystems view.

While the College of Forest Resources does have a professional undergraduate program in paper science and engineering and a professional graduate program in forestry, most of its students and faculty are engaged in environmental science and resource management. The opportunity to engage in collaborative teaching and research that will be provided by the College of the Environment will provide a richer educational experience for its students and create opportunities for enhanced collaborative research for its faculty. Current College of Forest Resources faculty reported that as many as 25% of the students enrolled in College undergraduate courses are from outside the college. Denying the Forest Resources faculty the opportunity to join the College of the Environment would leave them outside of this new college that is to be the focal point for environmental research and education on the Seattle campus.

Renaming the College of Forest Resources as the College of the Environment would create a potentially unworkable organizational structure. The college is currently undepartmentalized, which would need to be changed if other departments were assigned to the college. As a consequence, the Forest Resources faculty would need to be organized into a school or department. The result would be similar to the Provost's proposal. If the College of the Environment were formed by renaming the College of Forest Resources, other academic units may be reluctant to join.

### **Issues/Concerns**

The Review Committee met with or received written input from the Dean of the College of Forest Resources, the Interim Dean of the College of the Environment, 17 faculty members in the College of Forest Resources, 6 students in the college, 17 college staff members, 17 alumni, and 3 members of the Visiting Committee. Only one faculty member was opposed to the move to the College of the Environment, and another was concerned about the potential impact on the education of professional foresters. The other 15 faculty members were strongly supportive of the proposed reorganization. Most of the faculty members believed that the College of the Environment would be more attractive to many of the undergraduates currently enrolled in the College of Forest Resources because the students relate more to ecosystems management than they do to the forestry industry. Staff members had reservations about the reorganization. Most of the alumni were opposed to joining the College of the Environment. However, 2 alumni strongly supported the move. Some of the students were in favor of the proposal, while others had concerns regarding any impact to their education. The members of the Visiting Committee were split. Two were strong proponents of the move to the College of the Environment, while the third was concerned that a larger vision is needed for the College of the Environment and that the reorganization would weaken the College of Forest Resources. Specific issues/concerns raised by comments received are addressed below.

### ***Impact on Existing Undergraduate and Graduate Degrees***

Students voiced concern regarding potential changes in degrees being offered. Under the Provost's proposal, all undergraduate and graduate degrees currently offered by the College of Forest Resources would continue to be offered by the faculty of the School of Forest Resources. The school faculty would continue to determine admission and graduation requirements for each Forest Resources degree program.

### ***Oversight of Curriculum***

Some students and faculty voiced concern regarding potential curriculum changes that might be mandated by the College of the Environment. The curriculum of the one undergraduate degree offered by the College of Forest Resources contains University general education requirements and specific courses required by each of the two majors offered. Once the academic units join the College of the Environment and a college council is organized, there is a potential for supplementing University general education requirements with some additional college requirements, particularly in the Individuals and Societies area of study. Such proposed requirements, however, would need to be approved by the University Faculty Council for Academic Standards before they could be implemented.

### ***Allocation of Resources***

Some administrators, staff, and alumni expressed concern regarding the potential loss of resources, such as scholarships and endowed faculty positions, by joining the College of the Environment. Since donor agreements typically specify the use of endowments, these resources will remain with the School of Forest Resources. Faculty, staff, and budgetary resources of the College of Forest Resources are to transition to the School. Only the Office of the Dean and resources associated with that office would be lost by the conversion to a School. The University leadership has committed to no loss of resources as a consequence of this reorganization.

### ***Indirect Cost Recovery on Grants***

Concern was raised by several administrators and faculty that a portion of the indirect cost recovery received by the College of Forest Resources would be lost to the College of the Environment. The Interim Dean of the College of the Environment has proposed a 6-year transition period to allow the School of Forest Resources to generate additional research income to offset an allocation of indirect cost recovery to the College of the Environment.

### ***Research Sponsors***

Many faculty members in the College of Forest Resources engage in cooperative research projects with government agencies and non-profit foundations. While these activities fund numerous graduate students and provide significant public service, they do not generate many overhead funds. Some faculty members expressed concern that they will be asked to abandon these traditional relationships and focus on funding sources that support normal overhead rates. Since many graduates pursue careers in government agencies and non-profit organizations, the faculty members feel that it is critical to retain and enhance these relationships. Under the proposed reorganization, all cooperative research programs and centers currently housed in the College of Forest Resources would be retained by the School of Forest Resources.

### ***Recognition of Need for Social Scientists in the College of the Environment***

There are few social scientists on the faculty of the College of Forest Resources, and they expressed concern that they may become lost in a college of natural scientists, which it appears that the College of the Environment may become. Economic, policy, and human-interface issues need to be addressed as a part of environmental education and research, and the College of the Environment will need to ensure that social scientists are recognized for their contributions within the college. The proposed central interdisciplinary institute will be critical to incorporating social science and public policy perspectives.

### ***Donor Interest***

Some alumni expressed concern that many potential donors may not be interested in donating to the College of the Environment. This is probably true for potential donors who are interested in Forest Resources. Such donors can continue to make contributions to the School of Forest Resources and restrict the use of such donations to School use. This is a common practice in other Colleges where donors link their contributions to specific departments or programs within departments.

### ***Leadership of the School***

Several faculty and staff expressed concern that the individual chosen as Director of the School of Forest Resources should come from within the College of Forest Resources. This is to facilitate the integration of the School into the College of the Environment. The Provost has appointed a Search Committee to identify candidates for the position of Interim Director of the School of Forest Resources and a job description has been crafted. The School will need experienced leadership during the transition.

### ***Identity***

A major issue with the alumni is the loss of status by reorganizing the College of Forest Resources as a School of Forest Resources. The college has a 102-year history of educating professionals for the forestry industry, and the alumni perceive that the faculty may lose that focus if moved into the College of the Environment. From the alumni's perspective, the college will lose its autonomy regarding resource allocation and management of faculty hires. The college has an international reputation for the quality of its educational programs and research activities, which the alumni fear may diminish by the transition to a school within the College of the Environment. The alumni expressed concern that the inclusion of the professional forestry program into the multi-discipline College of the Environment may dilute its focus on providing job-ready graduates.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The 2009 Program Review Report concluded that the College of Forest Resources has significantly improved since the last review in 1996 by consolidating the number of

undergraduate majors and hiring new faculty members. The Self-Study for the review indicates that while the number of undergraduate degrees granted has grown, it is still rather small for a college. In FY 2004, 84 undergraduate degrees were awarded; in 2005, 52 undergraduate degrees were awarded; in 2006, 52 undergraduate degrees were awarded; and in 2007, 70 undergraduate degrees were awarded. While the numbers have increased, they still seem low for a college of about 50 faculty members.

While the College of Forest Resources will lose its status as an independent college under the Provost's proposal, the faculty and students will gain an opportunity for greater collaboration with other faculty and students engaged in environmental research and education. The curriculum offered and degrees granted will remain the same. The Provost and the Dean of the College of the Environment will need to ensure that there is no loss in resources by the transition. The challenge for the Forest Resources faculty will be to maintain disciplinary excellence while fostering an enhanced interdisciplinary strength in teaching and research.

A new leader needs to be selected for the school who will lead in the accomplishment of one of the goals identified in September 2008 by the College of Forest Resources faculty, staff, and students for 2008-2011, which is "Take a leadership role in making the College of Environment successful." The director of the school must lead in fostering a collaborative attitude among Forest Resources faculty as they transition into the College of the Environment and in developing strong relationships with the alumni and external professional stakeholders. Many of the external stakeholders expressed great concern regarding the reorganization, and they need to be reassured that the level of engagement of the School of Forest Resources will be similar to that historically experienced with the College of Forest Resources. The Director of the School must be seen by external stakeholders as the focal point within the University for all Forest Resources issues.

After careful assessment of the information provided and the concerns expressed, the Review Committee unanimously concludes that the Provost's proposal should be implemented.

## **Appendix – Documents Reviewed**

1. Proposal to the UW Board of Regents to Establish a College of the Environment at the University of Washington (June 2008)
2. College of Forest Resources Academic Program Review Self-Study (November 2008)
3. Report of the Ad Hoc Committee for Review of College of Forest Resources Centers (February 2009)
4. Proposal for Reorganization of Academic Units into a College of the Environment (March 2009)
5. Justification and Plans for Transition of the College of Forest Resources into a School of Forest Resources in the College of the Environment (March 2009)
6. Program Review of the College of Forest Resources (March 2009)