



BACKGROUND

Governor's recommended budget – state forests

Promoting and practicing sustainable forestry

The State Forests Program manages 781,000 acres of state-owned forestland to provide funding for the Common School Fund and Oregon counties. These lands also produce a full range of economic, social and environmental benefits for all Oregonians.

Over the past five years, \$247 million in revenue from state forests has been distributed to Oregon counties and their taxing districts, and \$66 million has been deposited in the Common School Fund.

The 2007-2009 State Forests budget proposes that 11 of 21 limited duration positions approved in 2005-2007 be made permanent, full-time positions to improve efficiency and productivity.

About the program

The program manages two different kinds of state-owned land, which together account for about 3 percent of Oregon's total forestland base:

Board of Forestry lands encompass 657,000 acres. They are managed to provide "greatest permanent value" to the people of Oregon. These forests produce sustainable timber harvest and revenue to the state, counties and local taxing districts. They also provide for fish and wildlife habitat, water quality and recreation. Fifteen counties deeded lands to the state in the mid-1900s (these "Board of Forestry lands" are primarily in northwest Oregon, including the Tillamook, Clatsop and Santiam State Forests).

Common School Lands were granted to Oregon at statehood by the federal government, with timber revenue destined for the Common School Fund. ODF manages 124,000 acres under an agreement with the Department of State Lands and the State Land Board. These lands are managed and protected for the maximum long-term benefit of public schools, consistent with sound stewardship, conservation and business principles.

Key issues affecting the budget

Limited duration positions. Over the past four years, the State Forests Program received legislative authorization for 21 limited duration positions to fully implement the program's integrated forest management plans (i.e., a range of social, environmental and economic values).

High turnover rate. It has been difficult for the program to attract and retain employees in limited duration positions. The jobs are temporary and for the most part pay less, thus employees trained in these positions tend to transfer to permanent positions in other locations before the limited duration position ends. These positions also are in rural areas, such as Tillamook, that lack adequate housing.

Key issues affecting the budget (cont.)

Staff reduction. Through organizational changes and improved efficiencies (the program absorbed several positions this last biennium), 11 permanent positions are being proposed to replace the 21 limited duration positions. Permanent positions will add continuity to the workforce, stimulate community resiliency and the economy in rural areas by providing jobs in communities adjacent to state forestlands, and improve the ability of the agency to deliver timber harvest, reforestation, social, environmental and recreational values on state forestlands.

What's proposed

The State Forests Program's portion of ODF's budget request for 2007–2009 is \$63.9 million, compared to the legislatively adopted 2005–2007 budget of \$62.2 million.

Authorization is being sought for 11 permanent positions to replace 21 current limited duration positions. This package totals about \$1.4 million. Five recreation-related positions, one maintenance position, one monitoring specialist and four positions related to timber sale processing comprise the request.

Source of funds

Revenue generated from the sale of timber on state forestlands would fund the \$1.4 million. No revenue is sought from the General Fund.

Results

The requested positions would:

- **Help implement the forest management plans** that provide for a range of forest values, including timber harvest, wildlife habitat and recreation. The positions would enhance reforestation efforts, improve monitoring projects for science-based decisions, increase the ability to deliver timber sales and improve log accountability, and provide adequate staffing for maintenance at the Tillamook Forest Center.
- **Meet the growing demand for recreation** on state forests. The program currently maintains more than 200 miles of motorized trails and 186 miles of hiking trails. In FY2006, the program hosted 30,782 campers at campgrounds in state forests. Since 2001, the program has developed 7 new campgrounds including 82 campsites, 73 miles of non-motorized trails and 38 miles of motorized trails.
- **Benefit the Fire Program**, which depends on ODF employees from other programs to staff positions during fire season.

For more information

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