

fr: Chris J.

COMMENTS TO THE OREGON BOARD OF FORESTRY
MARC VOMOCIL, CHAIR-ELECT
OREGON SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS
MARCH 7, 2007

Good morning Chairman Hobbs and members of the Board of Forestry. My name is Marc Vomocil. I am a forester and I work for Starker Forests, Inc..

I am also the Chair-elect of the Oregon Society of American Foresters. I am here today in that capacity. Normally, our Chair, John Prendergast, a professional forester from Medford, would be here to represent the state society, but he is at a fire fighting course.

I am here to give you a copy of the Position Statements of the Oregon Society of American Foresters entitled A Professional View of Forestry Issues in Oregon. I especially want to bring your attention to the most recent one adopted last month on Commercial Timber Harvest on Public Lands in Oregon.

Let me briefly tell you about the Oregon Society of American Foresters and how these position statements come about. Our organization has over 1000 professional members including field foresters, consultants, researchers, administrators and educators who help manage public and private forests throughout Oregon. We work for federal, state or local governments, for universities, for small and large landowners, for ourselves, and for small businesses and large corporations. Our diverse views and experiences were used to develop the position statements. Position statements are developed by the Policy and Legislation committee whose membership reflects the same wide diversity as our membership as a whole with retired and active foresters from both the public and private sector.

The newest position statement addresses the topic of commercial timber harvest on public lands in Oregon. It is based on a core value that forests and their diverse values must be sustained through simultaneously meeting environmental, economic, and community aspirations and needs. The Oregon Society of American Foresters supports commercial timber harvest as one of the

appropriate tools to maintain healthy and sustainable forests on public lands in Oregon. The bias in this position, and our other positions, is that active management of most forest lands in Oregon is necessary to provide for current and future needs of society..

Active management that includes timber harvest on public forest lands, especially federal lands, can play a major role in improving forest health, reducing fuel buildup and wildfire risk, providing forest biomass as an alternative fuel, providing raw materials for wood products, and boosting economic activity for rural Oregon. Timber harvest practices have improved greatly in recent years in response to new knowledge and public concerns. The Oregon Society of American Foresters believes that professionally planned timber harvest is compatible with other forest values and can often enhance and sustain those resources.

Although this position statement was not developed in response to the catastrophic loss of federal payments to counties in "lieu of timber harvest", it is nonetheless very timely. Careful, sustained timber harvest from federal lands, which has not occurred for many years, could provide a partial solution to the county budget funding crisis. Great opportunities exist to modestly increase active management, including commercial harvest, without sacrificing other resource values. We commend the Board of Forestry's initiative to be involved in federal forest land management planning through the Federal Forest Lands Advisory Committee. The Commercial Timber Harvest position statement will be made available to that committee on Friday.

The Oregon Society of American Foresters is ready to help from a scientific and professional viewpoint and pledges to provide input that would be useful to you. We hope that these position statements will be useful to you now and in the future as you address important forest issues. Thank you for your attention this morning.