



Promoting and practicing sustainable forestry

# 2009-2011 Budget Request



## Watershed Research Cooperative

### An Overview

The Watershed Research Cooperative, with members from academia, the forest sector and government, supports field research on the effects of modern forest practices on water quality, fish and other aquatic life.

The cooperative's work includes "paired watershed" studies, in which research is done in adjoining basins, one used as a "control," and one in which modern timber harvest, road-building and other activities occur. Research is essential to inform policymakers, evaluate the effectiveness of current forest protection rules, and craft rules that protect natural resources at the lowest regulatory cost.

Most information documenting the effects of timber harvest on private forestlands is based on logging practices before 1990. Efforts to improve and refine protection standards have been suspended in some cases, particularly in small, headwater streams, due to the lack of current scientific information. Research results will inform policymakers in crafting efficient and effective forest practices for meeting resource protection goals.

### Investing in forest research and monitoring

**Data about management effects are lacking for lands managed under modern forest practices** and used as commercial forestland (harvest-regenerated and roaded) under either wood production or ecosystem strategies.

**Effective forest health research requires a long-term, multi-year commitment of support and resources.** Oregon is beginning to benefit from findings of projects such as the Hinkle Creek, South Fork Trask and Alsea watershed studies.

These data are critical to ensure economically efficient forest practices. The information also supports Oregon Board of Forestry strategies and actions, described in the 2003 *Forestry Program For Oregon*, that include the protection, maintenance and enhancement of the soil and water resources of Oregon's forests.

### Watershed Research Cooperative

The Watershed Research Cooperative (WRC) is designed to conduct field-based research, education, and outreach activities. A collaborative approach allows the members to offer diverse contributions – expertise, funding, and lands on which research can be conducted. Members include Oregon State University, the Oregon departments of Forestry and Fish and Wildlife, the Oregon Forest Resources Institute, the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Geological Survey, Oregon Forest Industries Council, National Council for Air and Stream Improvement, Douglas County, Douglas Timber Operators, Starker Forests, Friends of Paul Bunyan Foundation/Associated Oregon Loggers, Roseburg Forest Products, Plum Creek Timber, and Forest Capital Partners. Other contributors include the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, Resource Management Services, and the Umpqua Fisheries Enhancement Derby.



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## Budget Backgrounder Watershed Research Cooperative

### What's proposed

This request seeks \$1.5 million in General Funds. No new positions are created.

The effectiveness of the program will be measured by a new Key Performance Measurement currently under development within the Private Forests Division.

### Expected outcomes and benefits

**This package creates the capacity to do critical watershed-level research.**

The funds requested would be passed through to the WRC to continue operation of current research in the Hinkle Creek Research and Demonstration Area Project, to investigate the effects on water quality and fish of current harvesting and forest management practices on industrial forestland. Baseline data have been collected, and harvesting is under way. The Hinkle Creek project, on Roseburg Forest Products land in southern Oregon, is a paired-watershed study.

The funds would also be used for the South Fork Trask River paired watershed study. Work in this watershed began in 2006 to install infrastructure and begin collecting baseline data. The historic Alsea paired watershed study will also be used to measure treatment effects of forest practices.

### To learn more

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