



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of State Lands

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State Land Board

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Governor

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Dr. Davis:

Thank you for your letter addressing the recent activity in the McDonald Research Forest that resulted in the unintentional harvest of several old growth trees. We appreciate the University's vocal recognition of the mistake and your subsequent decisive action to ensure it doesn't happen again.

As you know, the State Land Board last year charged the Oregon Department of State Lands to work collaboratively with Oregon State University to transform the Elliott into a research forest under the ownership and management of OSU's College of Forestry. As a part of this process, the Department has convened an Advisory Committee that is discussing a variety of issues to help inform OSU's anticipated proposal.

We are now approximately halfway through that process, which may result in the college bringing a plan to the Land Board for consideration in December. Any plan to successfully take over ownership of the Elliott must uphold key conservation principles previously articulated by the Land Board.

I am encouraged with your leadership in addressing the regrettable loss of these incredible specimens of Oregon old growth. The lessons learned from this recent incident in the McDonald forest reinforce the need for transparency and an open dialogue as we balance the needs for public access, recreation, wildlife habitat and timber management.

I look forward to seeing how this learning opportunity is reflected in OSU's plan to manage a research forest in a way that is consistent with the Land Board's principles and Oregonians' expectations to respect and protect the Elliott.

Best regards,

Vicki L. Walker, Director
Oregon Department of State Lands