

Potential Public Owners of Elliott State Forest Asked to Indicate Interest

The State Land Board has asked potential public owners of the Elliott State Forest to indicate their interest to the Department of State Lands, and to come before the Land Board at its December 18, 2018 meeting.

For purposes of finding a new owner, “public” means state or federal government agencies, federally-recognized Oregon tribes, state universities, and local governments.

How To Indicate Interest

Formal proposals from potential public owners are not being sought at this time. However, the Department of State Lands encourages potential public owners to provide high-level information regarding how their ownership would meet the Land Board’s desired outcomes for the Elliott State Forest. Particularly:

- How the potential owner would secure funding necessary to compensate the Common School Fund for the value of the Forest, and approximate timeline for securing funding.
- How they would ensure Land Board assumptions are met (see below).
- What partners the potential owner has or anticipates having in ownership or management scenarios they are considering.

Potential owners should contact Department of State Lands Director Vicki Walker at vicki.walker@state.or.us or 503-986-5237 by no later than December 5, 2018.

Land Board Assumptions

At the Land Board’s October 16 meeting, Board members confirmed the following assumptions:

- **Common School Fund responsibility.** Honoring the state’s fiscal duty to the Common School Fund remains a primary driver and outcome. The \$100 million in state bond revenue contributes to the Land Board’s fiduciary duty whether the forest remains a School Fund asset or is completely decoupled, but it does not fully address this fiduciary duty alone and, relevant to any decoupling proposal, would need to be applied as part of a broader, comprehensive financing approach.
- **Complete decoupling.** Removing the Forest’s connection to the Common School Fund and transferring title as well as management remains the Land Board’s preferred approach. In addition, the Land Board prefers a decoupling approach that applies to the entire forest. It does not support an approach—through the use of the \$100 million in state legislative bonds or otherwise— that applies decoupling and financial or legal transactions only to certain parcels rather than a forest-wide vision and approach to ownership, management, and the use of funds.

- **Public ownership and access.** The Land Board remains committed to public ownership of the Forest as opposed to sale to a private owner. Public ownership would include public access consistent with meeting fiduciary, public safety, and forest management responsibilities. That said, the Land Board's vision would not prohibit a public owner from partnering with private entities for management, fundraising, or other Elliott State Forest work.
- **Conservation values.** The Land Board seeks an outcome that secures conservation values for the Forest, including protecting ecologically important areas and species, but it does not intend human use and management of the overall forest acreage to be limited as in national parks or wilderness areas.
- **Working forest features.** The Forest would sustain some level of timber harvest and active management to address economic, job and community interests as well as forest ecosystem health (and possibly related opportunities for forest management research, education, and practice).
- **Workforce and local community benefit.** Elliott State Forest is an important asset to surrounding communities and any decoupling solution should support family wage jobs, community services, and quality of life in rural Oregon.
- **Tribal engagement.** The Land Board desires tribal involvement in shaping Elliott State Forest decoupling and, at a minimum, expects tribal consultation around future potential ownership options.

Additional information about the Land Board's direction regarding the future of the Forest is available in the Oregon Consensus report [Elliott State Forest: Next Step Considerations for Decoupling from Oregon's Common School Fund](#), pages 14-16.