

October 14, 2024

State Land Board  
775 Summer Street, NE  
Salem, OR 97301

***Re: Agenda Item #3 – ESRF proposed Forest Management Plan***

Dear Land Board members:

I am writing to comment on Appendix B, Policy (9) of the draft FMP, which states:

**“Maintain a financially self-sufficient forest entity and structure capable of operating and overseeing the forest and necessary infrastructure.”**

Historically, the phrase “financially self-sufficient” meant that operations of the ESF would be paid for out of timber harvest revenues. Since 2013, that has been impossible due to litigation.

In more recent times, proponents of the ESRF concept have speculated that annual operations could be paid for from the sale of carbon credits, although the carbon offset industry has been wracked by scandal and there is no evidence that cash flow from intangible assets could sustain a forest research station on a consistent basis.

Since the SLB is pledging to the Legislature that the ESRF will not require regular bailouts, inquiring minds want to know: how do you intend for the ESRF to be financially self-sufficient?

I look forward to your discussion of this tomorrow.

Sincerely,



John A. Charles, Jr.  
President & CEO



**From:** [Hilary Johnson](#)  
**To:** [DSL Landboard Testimony \\* DSL](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony for ESRF 10/15/23 meeting  
**Date:** Saturday, October 12, 2024 3:34:39 PM

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You don't often get email from hilary.johnson@2cj.k12.or.us. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good Day,

My name is Hilary Johnson. I have lived in Oregon all my life and currently I live on the south coast where I teach science at Pacific High School to grades 7-12. My interest in the Elliott Forest is both personal and professional.

As a science teacher I am always looking for places to take my students for field trips. Places where they can develop their appreciation for and their knowledge about nature. I work to expand their knowledge around sustainability and ecology in agricultural practices. Developing student knowledge and skills in these areas is valuable if they plan to work in ag fields. Also, it is just healthy for teens to spend time in nature and some students need to be taught that through personal experience that they will not seek out on their own.

On a personal note, I would appreciate the recreational opportunities available in the Elliott. I enjoy hiking and horseback riding and just spending time in the woods.

It is right the Tribes are integral in decision-making for the forest.

The educational and recreational opportunities outlined in the ESRF Management Plan can provide valuable educational and recreational opportunities for my students and me.

Thank you,  
-Hilary Johnson  
503-410-8649

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**Hilary Johnson, M.Ed.**  
**Science Teacher, Grades 7-12**  
**Pacific High School**  
**(541) 348 - 2293**





**NW Maps Co., Inc.**  
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To: Governor Tina Kotek, Secretary LaVonne Griffin-Valade, and Treasurer Tobias Read  
From: Bob Zybach, President, NW Maps Co.  
Date: October 15, 2024

RE: ESRF FMP: ORWW Peer Review & Giesy Plan Proposal

Dear Oregon State Land Board Members:

This meeting is, in part, to determine if the Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL) can continue to obtain state funding via a formal acceptance of their current draft forest management plan (FMP) for the Elliott State Forest (ESRF). Public comments for the proposed plan were due by August 4, 2024, and I submitted a 32-page scientific peer review on behalf of Oregon Websites & Watersheds Project, Inc. (ORWW) at that time:

[http://www.orww.org/Elliott\\_Forest/Politics/ODSL/ESRF/Zybach\\_DRAFT\\_20240804.pdf](http://www.orww.org/Elliott_Forest/Politics/ODSL/ESRF/Zybach_DRAFT_20240804.pdf)

The review focused on eight key topics of the proposed FMP, from economics to research design, roads, reforestation, HCPs, carbon credits, endangered species, cultural landscapes, wildfire risk, and climate change:

The principal conclusion of this review is the ESRF FMP proposal is fundamentally misdirected and likely to fail on both economic and scientific fronts if it is adopted in its present form. This analysis suggests this misdirection will continue to cost Oregon schools hundreds of millions of dollars, cost local communities hundreds of needed blue-collar jobs, significantly increase the risk of catastrophic wildfire to local people and wildlife, and will be unlikely to produce scientific information of particular value to Oregon landowners, resource managers, students, and taxpayers.

The review focused on many of the same points that Wayne Giesy, Jerry Phillips, David Gould, and I -- through ORWW -- have been personally and formally presenting to the Land Board for nearly 10 years. It also reiterates a long-standing request for public consideration of the proposed "Giesy Plan Alternative," originally developed at the direct requests of Governor Kate Brown and Senator Ted Ferrioli in 2016.

The contracted DSL response to this review and to the other 450 public comments -- more than 400 of which were mostly professional environmental lobby duplicates -- was not made until last week, less than seven days ago! **Due to the abrupt and extremely limited time given in which**

**to consider these materials by either yourselves, your staff, or the general public -- and also to consider the following serious concerns on my part -- I would like to request a postponement of your decision for at least 60 days.**

On page 11 of the current DSL response, it is noted that: "*Three commenters specifically mentioned the "Giesy Plan Option" and encouraged DSL to consider this alternative as a viable starting point for replacing the draft FMP.*"

Then, buried deep on page A-65, is the astounding note, without citation or reference:

DSL appreciates commenter's affinity for the "Geisy [sic] Plan". It was an option explored as part of the 2017-18 Oregon Consensus independent assessment effort to explore alternative public ownership options for the Elliott. This assessment did not indicate widespread support for this option as an approach to the Elliott's future (compared to other pathways).

This is dirty politics. What "assessment did not indicate widespread support for this option?" I have never heard of this before, and the 2017-18 date and series of secretive DSL-OSU meetings taking place at that time never revealed anything of the sort. Just the opposite -- the Giesy proposal has been written about in dozens of articles and editorials by myself and others, in both regional and national publications; there have been numerous radio interviews, blog posts, social media comments, formal presentations, classroom reports, and websites that have all discussed, promoted, and/or supported this proposal. It has never gained political traction, though, seemingly because of its Republican beginning and supporters. And it has never been publicly considered by the Land Board, DSL, or OSU as consistently requested.

Following the February, 2024 DSL meeting of this Board, each of you were given a copy of my book, *The Elliott: An Anthology*, courtesy of Jen Hamaker of Oregon Natural Resources Industries (ONRI). It would be unreasonable to expect you or your staff to have read it, but the 22 chapters are a chronological series of articles I have written and that were published over the past 10 years that document these claims.

In 2016 and 2017, Wayne Giesy and I had been working closely with Ed Ray when he was President of OSU, Jim Paul was Director of DSL, Ted Ferrioli was Republican leader, Anthony Davis was interim Dean of OSU Forestry, and Dennis Richardson was Secretary of State. The focus was on development of an Elliott management plan that would continue contributing to the Common School Fund and providing local jobs, while conducting meaningful wildlife habitat research and statewide educational opportunities.

The proposal would last 20 years, at which time its findings would be considered by a new generation of planners and residents. For those 20 years we suggested naming it the "Elliott State Educational Forest" for its specific focus on meaningful forestry research and education for public schools and private landowners -- and future planners.

Following the December 2017 State Land Board Meeting, Wayne and I met with President Ray for a private 90-minute meeting to discuss the proposed "Giesy Plan Alternative." He seemed very impressed with the proposal and set up a meeting for us with Dean Davis on February 3, after he returned from vacation in Canada. When we arrived to meet the Dean, we were introduced to a fourth participant, Geoff Huntington, whom we were told was "driving to

meetings in Salem every day" while representing OSU Forestry in negotiations with DSL regarding the Elliott. We were never told he was an environmental lawyer, and he never said much and mostly took notes and bantered about freeway driving speeds.

We discussed our proposed "Elliott State Educational Forest" idea in detail, as a first step in order to hopefully "work closely" with OSU going forward. The Dean seemed very supportive and said it would depend on expected funding. The very next day, February 4, the new "interim" Director of DSL, Vicki Walker, was signing an MOU written by Huntington creating an "Elliott State Research Forest" and a press release had gone out to OPB — without a word to either me or Wayne. A retired OSU prof "leaked" the confidential information as to what had happened a week later.

The MOU focused on carbon credits instead of jobs, and "habitat reserves" instead of existing roads and trails. Huntington was in the lead position on the Oregon Consensus project and never bothered to contact either Wayne or me when OSU secured its funds -- which were mostly spent on carbon credit research and faculty positions. And now we learn we had been "canceled" behind closed doors more than six years ago, and not a word until last week, on page A-65.

This doesn't seem right. This continued costly economic and political failure of DSL management is clearly described and predicted in my book on pages 67-72; my January 2020 article, "Elliott Forest Boondoggle vs. The Giesy Plan Alternative."

A course correction is long past due, and the public deserves to know what is taking place, and what alternatives might be possible. More time is needed to consider this costly FMP and its focus on a few profiting from carbon credits, rather than our schools and rural counties profiting once again from a functional working forest with untapped educational and research opportunities.

Sincerely,

Bob Zybach, PhD  
President, NW Maps Co.