



**NEWS RELEASE – for immediate release**

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**Land Board votes to retain public ownership of the Elliott State Forest,  
continue Common School fund distribution policy**

Salem – The State Land Board today voted to keep the Common School lands within the Elliott State Forest (about 82,500 acres) in public ownership.

The Land Board members voted unanimously to terminate the “protocol” that was established in 2015 to seek alternative ownership of the forest. The Board directed the Department of State Lands to move forward with a new planning effort to keep the forest in public ownership.

At the meeting, each board member shared their ideas on possible public ownership plans for the Elliott.

Governor Brown’s plan involves \$100 million in state bonding to buy out high-conservation acres in a “trust land transfer” process, and securing an updated Habitat Conservation Plan to protect threatened species in the forest.

Treasurer Read’s plan builds on the Governor’s proposal, potentially transferring the entire forest at a future time to Oregon State University and the College of Forestry.

Secretary of State Richardson encouraged the Land Board and staff to investigate potential land exchanges with the federal government that would trade Elliott acreage for “commercial-grade” forest lands.

Several invited panelists provided information about the different plans, and the Board heard testimony from Jim Green of the Oregon School Boards Association, representing Common School Fund beneficiaries, and Michael Rondeau of the Cow Creek Tribe, a partner with Lone Rock Timber in the one plan received in response to the protocol. About 35 people provided public testimony.

After a presentation on the Common School Fund’s investment performance and projected distributions, the Land Board voted to continue to follow the distribution policy in place since 2009, distributing 4 percent of the three-year rolling average of the value of the fund.

More information on both agenda items is available on the State Land Board meetings webpage:  
<http://www.oregon.gov/dsl/Board/Pages/SLBmeetings.aspx>

The State Land Board consists of Governor Kate Brown, Secretary of State Dennis Richardson and State Treasurer Tobias Read. The Department of State Lands administers diverse natural and fiscal resources. Many of the resources generate revenue for the Common School Fund, such as state-owned rangelands and timberlands, waterway leases, estates for which no will or heirs exist, and unclaimed property. Twice a year, the agency distributes fund investment earnings to support K-12 public schools. The agency also administers Oregon's Removal-Fill Law, which requires people removing or filling certain amounts of material in waters of the state to obtain a permit.

[www.oregon.gov/dsl](http://www.oregon.gov/dsl)