OREGON CONSERVATION NETWORK

State Forester Doug Decker
Oregon Department of Forestry
2600 State Street
Salem, Oregon 97310

RE: Oregon Department of Forestry's 2017-19 Budget

Dear State Forester Doug Decker,

The Oregon Conservation Network (OCN) is comprised of more than 40 Oregon non-profits with over one hundred thousand individual members. Our mission is to support pro-conservation priorities, protect our unique quality of life, and ensure a better Oregon for our children. We care deeply about the Oregon Department of Forestry's (ODF) mission to "serve the people of Oregon by protecting, managing, and promoting stewardship of Oregon's forests to enhance environmental, economic, and community sustainability."

The work ODF performs is important to OCN's members. The following items have been prioritized by OCN. We hope your agency takes these suggestions into strong consideration when budgeting for the 2017-19 biennium:

1. Support a trust-land transfer program (TTP). A TTP similar to Washington State's, is essential for providing a pathway to decouple important forest and rangelands from the pressure to produce revenue. (Introduced as HB 3474 in 2015)
    a. Provide $10 million in Lottery or GO bonds to fund the TTP and begin to decouple part of the Elliott State Forest.
2. State Forest Fire Equity. Change fire formula to ensure state forest program does not bear a disproportionate burden of fire costs.
3. Support three pops from 2015:
    a. Support State Forest Recreation. Provide $2 million in General Fund to support state forest recreation program (follows package 131 in 2015).
    b. Support Research and Monitoring. Provide $2 million in General Fund to support research and monitoring program (follows package 132 in 2015).
    c. South Fork Camp. Provide $2 million in General Fund to support state forest prison camp (follows package 133 in 2015).
4. Landslide Rule Funding: Provide funding for ODF to complete the rulemaking for required protections against landslides that could threaten human health and safety.
5. Special Resource Sites. Proved funding for ODF to complete rules to protect rare plants and animals on private forests.
6. Consider equitable proposals that come out of the forest fire funding taskforce.
7. Focus on improving water quality, forest roads, and landslide prone areas.
8. Aerial Spray. Reduce the use of aerial spray, particularly around populated areas, schools, and homes.

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a. Include aerial spray notifications in the Forest Activity Electronic Reporting and Notification System (FERNS), which is under development.

9. Purchase state fire Lloyds of London insurance policy, in accordance with large fire funding needs.

At present, there appear to be a few budgeting challenges on the horizon for Oregon. While much of ODF's funding comes from tree harvest, inflating PERS costs, rising healthcare rates, cost of service adjustments, and inflation factors are just a few of the growing elements challenging our state budget. Now more than ever it is important to closely examine and prioritize our agency budgets.

We look forward to working with you as you continue your 2017-19 budget process.

Sincerely,

The Oregon Conservation Network

(Contact: Adam Meyer at adam@olcv.org or 971-404-6501)

CC: Board of Forestry members: Chair Tom Imeson; Sybil Ackerman-Munson; Cindy Deacon Williams; Nils Christoffersen; Tom Insko; Gary Springer; Mike Rose. Ways and Means Co-chairs: Senator Richard Devlin; Representative Peter Buckley; Representative Kathleen Taylor. Governor Kate Brown.