



SIERRA  
CLUB  
FOUNDED 1892

OREGON CHAPTER SIERRA CLUB  
1821 SE ANKENY ST • PORTLAND, OR 97214  
PHONE (503) 238-0442 • FAX (503) 238-6281  
OREGON.CHAPTER@SIERRACLUB.ORG  
WWW.OREGON.SIERRACLUB.ORG

To: Oregon Board of Forestry and State Forester Daugherty  
From: Rhett Lawrence  
Date: April 25, 2018  
RE: State Forests Management Plan

Chair Imeson, State Forester Daugherty, and Board members:

My name is Rhett Lawrence and I am the Conservation Director of the Oregon Chapter of the Sierra Club. On behalf of our more than 30,000 members and supporters in the state, I am pleased to present some brief testimony on the state forest management planning process you have initiated.

As many of you know, the Sierra Club has had an active role in efforts related to the Tillamook, Clatsop, and Elliott State Forests for many years. And now that the management of the latter is largely being dealt with in other forums, we think it is critical that the Tillamook, Clatsop, and other state forests also be planned for in a thoughtful and deliberate way. These are the backyard forests for many of our members, providing numerous recreational opportunities, as well as vital fish and wildlife habitat. In addition, the carbon sequestration benefits of our state forests are becoming increasingly important in an era of dramatic climate change. We need to be managing these forests for the long-term benefit of ALL Oregonians.

We believe ODF and the Board need to be putting increased efforts into improving your conservation outcomes and creating more permanent conservation areas. As it stands, there continues to be too great an emphasis on timber sales and clearcutting in older forests. Instead, we should be focusing in Oregon on creating the long-term reserves that are necessary to protect and increase old growth forest, sequester carbon, and protect critical fish and wildlife habitat. Indeed, ideally we would like to see you headed toward creating a Habitat Conservation Plan to provide secure harvest levels while also protecting habitat. HCPs are a proven mechanism to both protect wildlife and allow active management; we believe it merits serious consideration in your state forest planning.

You all know that we are already experiencing the effects of climate change, and these will only increase in coming years. As a state, we need to be taking the steps we can to help mitigate that climate crisis, and preserving our forests for their carbon storage is a smart way to do that. We encourage you to place increased emphasis on the carbon sequestration benefits our state forests

provide as you move forward with your planning. And in this and all of your decision-making, we ask that you first and foremost base your management on sound, objective science. Science-based management for our state forests must be your guiding principle.

Finally, we appreciate your acknowledgment of your need to diversify your revenue sources, as the current model of receiving your funding almost exclusively from timber harvest is not sustainable over the long haul. In order to remain financially viable well into the future, ODF will need to find new ways of doing business that do not solely rely on timber harvest. Obviously, general funding from the state legislature is in short supply, but that doesn't mean you – and we – shouldn't continue to ask for it. As we saw with the funding provided for the Elliott last year, when we can make a compelling case for the need to protect our state forests for all the values that mean so much, occasionally the legislature will come through. I encourage the Board and the Department to continue to advocate for such funding, and we stand ready to assist you in doing so.

Thanks very much for considering my comments and we look forward to working with the Board and ODF to protect our invaluable state forests.