

Dear Oregon Board of Forestry,

Oregon has a reputation for being a green state - filled with people who recycle, ride their bikes, and love to hike and fish. But is it? When it comes to forestry practices, the evidence shows that Oregon is not protecting its water, wildlife, or communities.

There are 10.6 million acres of private timberland in Oregon. That's one-sixth of the entire state. Yet the laws to protect clean water and public health on these lands are far less protective than on federal lands, and less protective than in California, Washington, and Idaho.

Oregon's own science team and two federal agencies said in 2015 that Oregon's rules on private forests do not protect clean water for people, fish, or wildlife. In 2016, these federal agencies withdrew grant money to Oregon for failing to keep forestry practices from polluting coastal streams.

It's time for a change. It's time for Oregon's laws to catch up with Oregon's values.

The timber industry operates profitably in California, Washington and Idaho under more stringent rules. Oregon needs to comprehensively reform the Oregon Forest Practices Act to: 1) require standing tree buffers along all streams; 2) ban clearcutting on steep, unstable slopes that are prone to landslides; 3) ban the most toxic herbicides; and 4) reform the Oregon Harvest Tax so that communities -- not industry -- benefit from private forestry tax revenue.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Meikle
4207 N Albina Ave Portland, OR 97217-3003