

Chair Imeson, State Forester Daugherty, and members of the Board,

My name is Mark Gourley, I'm a forester, having been blessed to work with two Oregon family forest landowners; the Starker Family (owner 75+ years) and the Hill Family (owners 103 years).

Like Most Oregonians they love and care for the land, value the local workforce, do what's right for their communities and as family forest landowners are silent philanthropists here in Oregon. Both families encourage managing for the future, being creative and trying new ideas, and strive for adaptive, active forest management.

Many land managers value the ability to be innovators, especially in a collaborative setting. Oregon Department of Forestry employees, in my many years of observing individuals like Mike Totey, Dave Mormon, Shannon Loffelnacher, Kyle Kaupp, Chris Cline, Alan Kanaskie and the whole batch of people working in the ODF insect and disease group desire and professionally thrive in such a setting. ODF, in my opinion has the best Forest Disease and Insect group in world!

Oregon State Forest worker bees are dedicated to their profession and the land they manage and protect. They very much enjoy being students of the land, read the science, and are real innovators.

With the concern for Oregon's forest health and the devastating impact a native foliar pathogen, (Swiss Needle Cast) was having the Swiss Needle Cast Cooperative was birthed. Through the leadership of Dr. Bill Atkinson (OSU), Alan Kanaskie (ODF) and John Washburn (Green Diamond) we assembled Oregon's best scientists and started the Swiss Needle Cost Cooperative. We brought together soil scientists, plant physiologists, plant nutritionists, dendrochronologist, plant pathologists, epidemiologists, wildlife biologists, and biometricians for 21 years and began researching and together studying Swiss Needle Cast disease and the impacts on Oregon's landscape.

So far, what we have learned about Swiss Needle Cast:

- Host specific to Douglas Fir
- A native pathogen with three different, unique DNA footprints
- Growth loss averages 26%, however mortality is occurring
- With Mortality from Swiss Needle Cast on Older Douglas Fir we may soon see a loss of nesting habitat for owls and marbled murrelets.
- Over the past 25 years, Coastal Washington and British Columbia have been increasingly concerned and are now participating partners
- Precommercial and commercial thinning helps stand health
- Mixing other conifers like Western Red Cedar, Western Hemlock, Grand Fir, and Alaska Yellow Cedar helps ameliorate risks.
- Managing noxious weeds such as Scotch Broom and Himalayan Blackberry, with herbicides reduces allelopathy and makes more water and nutrients available for young forests.

- Collaborative research works! We all benefit from new knowledge and on the ground, real observations by dedicated land managers with a passion to do better.

One final note, great people like the ODF staff and Oregon's private land managers love being innovators and work with unparalleled passion for the land. Policy makers, such as yourselves, are also truly dedicated Oregon citizens, as I have known and worked with many of you and your predecessors.

As policy makers, I encourage you not to create excess process laden with too many acronyms. Rather, encourage land managers to know and understand the best science and manage with a love of the land and a passion for the profession.