

Rogue Drinking Water Partnership

August 29, 2019

Oregon Board of Forestry
Board Support Office
2600 State Street
Salem, OR 97310

Dear Board of Forestry:

The Rogue Drinking Water Partnership (RDWP) requests that streamside protections for the Siskiyou Region be made consistent with the riparian protections currently in effect for the rest of western Oregon. The RDWP is a coalition of drinking water providers and other supporting organizations in the middle and upper Rogue River Basin. Drinking water providers include the cities of Grants Pass, Rogue River, Gold Hill, Ashland, Medford Water Commission (serving Medford, Eagle Point, White City, Jacksonville, Central Point, Phoenix, Talent and two water districts) and water providers in and near Shady Cove. Protection of the sources of drinking water is essential to ensure clean water for the communities served by RDWP, and for all water users in the Rogue River Basin. More than 200,000 people drink water from surface water sources in the Rogue/Siskiyou Region.

Most of RDWP's 1,500,000-acre drinking water source watershed is forested, and much of it is privately-owned. Greater protection of riparian zones will help prevent degradation of these invaluable water sources by reducing solar input and warming of streams, and by reducing erosion and sedimentation. Municipal drinking water providers are being held to tighter and tighter standards around temperature and nutrients in our source water, which, when not properly controlled, increase the risk of toxic algae outbreaks and other concerns, and can lead to increased treatment costs.

Strengthening the rules in the Siskiyou Region to the level of the rest of western Oregon is a prudent, protective approach, and one which the Board of Forestry should adopt.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,



Jason Canady
Public Works Director
City of Grants Pass



Craig Harper
Watershed Administrator
Medford Water Commission