



*To create awareness and appreciation for the value of trees, and encourage an understanding about the protection, management and conservation of the renewable forest*

Oregon Women in Timber  
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Board of Forestry Testimony  
November 6, 2019

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

My name is Jill Bell and I am here today to share with you information about Oregon Women in Timber, known as OWIT, which is a non-profit organization that focuses on forestry education and advocacy. I joined OWIT 1.5 years ago and am currently the President of the Lane County Chapter and the State Secretary.

My background is deeply tied to logging and the timber industry. I am proud to say I am a loggers wife, a loggers daughter, and a loggers sister. My personal background is in forest engineering and I have worked in the industry for the past 16 years. Because of this, I am very concerned about the future of our industry and I want to make sure fact-based information is getting out to the public. My whole family is proud of what we do and we want people to see the good in logging and active forest management. We have also been concerned about mis-information being provided to the general public by people who use emotion rather than science to talk about clearcutting, logging, and forestry. This is why I joined OWIT and am active with the organization.

One of the things that attracted me to OWIT is our interactive, science based forestry education program for K-8<sup>th</sup> grade, called Talk About Trees. The program is presented by experienced facilitators and offered free to classrooms throughout Oregon. The goal of the program is to encourage an awareness and appreciation for the value of trees and forests in our daily lives, including information about the protection, management, and conservation of the renewable forests.

The Lane County OWIT Chapter just did a Forest Products Month Campaign during October. As part of this campaign: we ran radio ads; had a "Forest Fact Friday" giveaway on the radio; had members on talk radio shows, ran a social media campaign that had 20,000 unique reaches; held mill tours where 12 University of Oregon students participated, and hosted a trivia night with Lane Families for Farms and Forests where 20 people showed up. It was hugely rewarding to engage with our communities and educate the public about our love for the forests and our industry.

As a lifelong rural Oregonian, I love the communities and landscapes where I have the privilege of working. The timber industry provides family wages jobs to people who, like myself, love to be outdoors. I can't even put into words the true passion and love for the land that foresters and loggers have and that I see every day from my co-workers, employees, contractors, and family. We more than anyone, want to ensure working forests are around for next generation, as my family has left the forest for my generation to steward.