

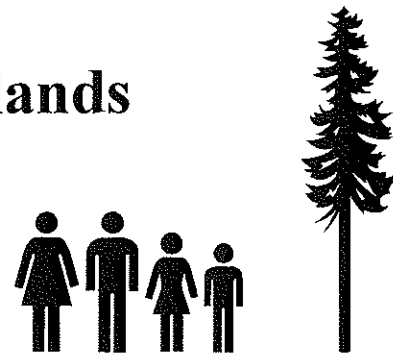
Committee for Family Forestlands

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Tom Imeson, Chair
Oregon Board of Forestry
2600 State Street
Salem, OR 97310

March 18, 2013

RE: HB 2050 Wildfire Protection Act

Dear Chair Imeson and Board Members,

The Committee for Family Forestlands (CFF) has followed the development of the Fire Protection Act which has become HB 2050. The CFF strongly supports this bill and are appreciative of the Board of Forestry's support as well. Following are some reasons:

- Family forestlands play a vital role in Oregon's ability to meet our community, environmental and economic goals. These family forests are working forests managed for a variety of public and private values including but not limited to clean air and water, fish and wildlife habitat and recreation. In addition the activities on these lands provide jobs and economic benefit to the State of Oregon. Protection of our forest lands from wildfire is not only in the best interest of the landowners but also in the best interest of the citizens of the State of Oregon that enjoy and depend on the benefits these forests provide.
- Quick aggressive wildland fire detection and response is key in suppressing the nearly 1000 wildfires that occur on ODF protection annually. Some of these fires are on or threaten family forestlands.
- Large fires have high costs and damage our natural resources. Although few fires grow large, even one can cause major damage and cost millions to suppress. A small general fund investment leverages new landowner dollars, more than doubling existing severity capacity to keep fires small reducing the states and landowners risk.
- Challenges exist on the eastside of the state where there is lower productivity on the dry site forest, resulting in marginal economic returns to the landowners. Due to climate and timber type the lands are also more susceptible to large catastrophic fires. As a result, the number of fires and cost of fire protection is greater largely due to lightning strikes. The Wildfire Protection Act helps address these issues and helps maintain working green forest on the eastside of the state. This is extremely important to Family Forestland owners on the eastside of the state.

Committee for Family Forestlands

Re:

Date

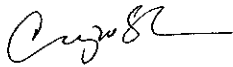
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- Over time the Wildfire Protection Act restructures how costs are allocated between the State and Forest landowners equally sharing large fire costs. This phased in approach to equal sharing aligns with the existing sharing of costs at the local levels and is in recognition of the broader public benefits green forest provide for all Oregonians.

For the reasons mentioned above, we as a committee strongly support HB 2050, the Wildfire Protection Act.

Sincerely,

Committee for Family Forestlands



Craig Shinn, Chair



Susan Watkins, Vice-Chair

cc: Oregon Board of Forestry Members
Doug Decker, State Forester, Private Forests Division Chief

The Committee for Family Forestlands is a statutory committee appointed by the Board of Forestry to provide advice and recommendations regarding family forests and includes family forestland owners from different areas of the state, environmental organization and forest industry representatives, a citizen-at-large and ex-officio members representing the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), Extension Service, Oregon Forest Resources Institute, the Oregon Small Woodlands Association and logging or forestry consulting interests.