

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

Action:	Do Pass and Be Placed on the Consent Calendar
Vote:	7 - 0 - 2
Yeas:	Clem, Esquivel, McKeown, Reardon, Thompson, Unger, Witt
Nays:	0
Exc.:	Krieger, Whitsett
Prepared By:	Beth Patrino, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	4/25, 5/7

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Allows representatives of forestland owners, or when applicable, representatives of grazing landowners, to be appointed on forestland classification committees. Authorizes State Forester to intervene in appeal and defend forestland classification committee order. Effective on the 91st day after adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Whether State Forester intervention in appeal of forest classification committee order would affect counties
- Restoration of language allowing landowner representatives

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) provides wildfire protection on approximately 16 million acres of private, county, state and federally owned forestland in Oregon. Counties may establish forestland classification committees to identify forest and grazing land within their boundaries for purposes of the ODF fire protection program. Until 2009, the law required the county governing body to appoint at least one forest landowner or representative and, when applicable, one grazing landowner or representative. The language referring to “representatives” was removed during updates to the statute in 2009. As a result, only landowners are eligible to serve on forestland classification committees.

A public hearing must be held on a preliminary forestland classification; thereafter, final classifications may be appealed to the appropriate circuit court. Currently, the statute does not specify who may intervene in appeals or defend a classification ordered by a committee.

Senate Bill 31 would allow representatives of forest and grazing landowners to serve on forestland classification committees and authorize the State Forester to intervene if a forestland classification committee’s final order is appealed in circuit court.