

REVENUE: Revenue statement issued

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action:	Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed and Be Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means by Prior Reference
Vote:	4 - 1 - 0
Yeas:	Baertschiger Jr, Close, Prozanski, Roblan
Nays:	Burdick
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Beth Patrino, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	2/11

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Establishes reforestation cost assistance program and tax credit program for forestland damaged by catastrophic fire event. Establishes Catastrophic Fire Reforestation Assistance Account (Account) in General Fund and restricts use of Account by Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF). Defines terms. Requires submittal of request for preliminary certificate and reforestation project plan to State Forester. Establishes criteria for approval of preliminary certificate request. Directs Board of Forestry (Board) to adopt rules establishing commercial forestland categories to calculate net reforestation costs. Directs State Forester to reduce maximum assistance for each certificate on pro rata basis if total reforestation costs assistance for all preliminary certificates in fire loss year for cost assistance program exceeds lesser of one million dollars or the amount in Account or for tax credit program exceeds six million dollars. Authorizes Board to authorize State Forester to seek additional funding for cost assistance program from Emergency Board if Board determines extraordinary levels of losses were incurred. Authorizes small forestland owner to receive up to 50 percent of costs up to maximum amount stated in certificate. Establishes amount of tax credit which may be claimed by landowner. Requires landowner submit proof of costs incurred on annual basis. Applies programs to catastrophic fire events that took place between August 1, 2012 and December 31, 2013. Takes effect on 91st day after date on which 2014 regular session adjourns.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Reforestation after a fire is not required
- Unique nature of O&C land ownership
- Cost of reforestation

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Replaces measure with exception of whereas statements.

BACKGROUND: The 2013 fire season was Oregon’s most severe fire season in decades. Below average snowpack, early snowmelt, and below-normal spring precipitation in many parts of the state all contributed to an environment of low fuel-moisture levels and extreme fire behavior during Oregon’s fire season. Total acres burned exceeded 100,000 and total large fire costs incurred by the Oregon Department of Forestry are estimated at roughly \$122 million. Senate Bill 1513 A would establish a reforestation cost assistance program and tax credit program for forestland damaged by a catastrophic fire event.