

SENATE BILL 248

*Comments to the Senate Environment & Natural Resources Committee
by Gil Riddell, AOC Policy Director, on March 11, 2015.*

The Association of Oregon Counties, representing all 36 county governments, **and the Council of Forest Trust Land Counties**, representing the 15 counties that transferred land to the State for State Forests, **urge the Senate Environment & Natural Resources Committee to send Senate Bill 248 to the Senate floor with a do-pass recommendation.**

The bill clarifies that the State Forester may enter into and administer contracts for activities necessary or convenient for sales of state timber.

The Department of Forestry currently contracts with a single successful bidder for purchase of all timber in a sale and the associated harvest work. Auctioning to multiple buyers would likely maximize sales revenue, which provides the necessary resources to manage the State Forests and is shared with forest trust land counties.

Current timber sales are generally dominated by one species or grade. Offered as one unit likely limits the number of bidders and produces lower sale prices. Being able to divide sales by species or grade, for example, would likely maximize the price for each timber type.

Selling by sorts could also increase competition. This flexibility is an advantage to buyers interested in a particular log type, who would be able to bid on the appropriate sort only.

Clearly authorizing this flexibility is good for the buyers, the State, the State Forests, and the stakeholder counties.

AOC and CFTLC firmly support SB 248, and urge its passage.