



March 26, 2015

**Clackamas County Board of Commissioners
Policy Position**

HB 3240: Establishing a Task Force on the Transfer of Federal Land Ownership in Oregon

Clackamas County supports HB 3240: The Board of County Commissioners supports HB 3240, which establishes a Task Force on the Transfer of Federal Land Ownership in Oregon.

Like many counties in Oregon, Clackamas County was once primarily supported by its natural resource based timber economy. Approximately 52% of the County is forest land managed by either the U.S. Forest Service or the Bureau of Land Management. While much of that land is protected under the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan, key matrix lands are designated for responsible timber harvest for the purpose of economic sustainability and fire prevention.

Unfortunately, changes in forest management and natural resource policies, coupled with constricting litigation tied to the timber stands designated for harvest, have constrained federal agency efforts to meet legislated sale quantities to support Oregon counties. As a result of this current impasse in active federal forest management, timber harvests in Clackamas County and throughout Oregon have declined dramatically. Since 1990, Clackamas County has lost 12 mills, with seven of nine communities losing all mill infrastructure representing a loss of 798 full time mill jobs.

Clackamas County is a statewide leader in forest management practices and would welcome a discussion on the transfer of federal lands to the state. The proposed bicameral and bipartisan State Task Force would greatly aid this effort by studying the legal, economic, social, and practical benefits and risks associated with the transfer of federal lands to the State.

Clackamas County also urges that the bill be amended to add two county governing body members as representatives on the Task Force in order to ensure a local perspective on this important issue.

We urge a “yes” vote on HB 3240.

Please contact Chris Lyons at clyons@clackamas.us for more information.