



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Forestry

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March 29, 2017

Honorable Brian Clem, Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
Room 347, State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301



Re: Current Policy Framework of the Oregon Forest Practices Act

Dear Chair Clem and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Forestry appreciates the opportunity to provide informational testimony on Oregon's Forest Practices Act.

The Forest Practices Act (FPA) is a cornerstone of Oregon's policy and regulatory framework for protecting resources on nonfederal forestland. The framework relies on two main regulatory approaches augmented by voluntary measures and incentives. Oregon's strong land use laws, that maintain forestland in forest use, provide resource protection by avoiding the negative impacts to natural resources from development. Statewide Planning Goal 4 – Forest Lands – keeps forestland from being divided into parcels too small to manage effectively for timber, habitat, recreation, watershed protection, and other purposes. The FPA works in concert with land use laws to ensure economically efficient forest practices that ensure the continuous growing and harvesting of forest tree species and the maintenance of forestland for such purposes as the leading use on privately owned land. The rules ensure sound management of soil, air, water, fish and wildlife resources. The Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds provides for additional voluntary approaches to improve water quality and resource outcomes on forestland. This three-tiered approach results in forestland having the highest water quality in Oregon.

The FPA assures Oregonians that private forest lands are managed with resource protections, and that a stable regulatory environment exists for forest businesses. Enacted in 1971 and modified over 30 times since, it requires reforestation and scientifically supported best practices for all aspects of forestry, including stream protection, water quality, road construction, pesticide application, sensitive wildlife sites and other resources. The success of the Private Forests program depends on shared responsibility and partnerships among stakeholders, forestland owners/operators, other state agencies and the department. The program gains compliance with the Forest Practices Act by maintaining an effective balance of science-based rules, incentives, technical assistance and uniform enforcement.

When evaluating the effectiveness of Oregon's framework for resource protection on forestlands, the Department focuses on outcomes, such as riparian function and water quality. The Department supports the Board of Forestry (Board) in adopting policies, rules, and best management practices to achieve these outcomes. The Board values and conducts open and transparent public policy processes with members of the public, stakeholders, and other natural resource agencies. The Department supports the Board's adaptive management process, by conducting effectiveness and compliance monitoring to ensure that the FPA and associated rules are being implemented and are effective at meeting desired outcomes of resource protection.

I would be pleased to provide more information on Oregon's framework for resource protection on forestlands, including our strong land use laws, efficient and effective Forest Practices Act, and voluntary measures conducted under the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds.

Sincerely,



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c: Jason Miner, Governor's Natural Resources Policy Manager
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ODF Executive Team