



Woodland Owners Who Love Their Land

March 29, 2017

Brian Clem, Chairman
Oregon House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

**Re: Oregon Small Woodlands Association Testimony on House Bill 3226
Presented by Rick Barnes, President, Oregon Small Woodlands Association**

Chairman Clem and Committee Members:

I am Rick Barnes, a small woodland owner, a forestry consultant and the current President of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association. Today I am here testifying on behalf of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association and the thousands of family forestland owners throughout the State of Oregon.

As I read the 28 pages of House Bill 3226, I realized it would take several hours to clearly explain all of the devastating problems this bill would create. I was shocked and extremely concerned such a piece of legislation would even make it to a hearing. As I read the preamble to the bill, it is clear to me it is a direct attack on the private forest landowners of the State of Oregon. There are numerous statements in the opening section of the bill that slander private landowners of this State. I will take my time today to focus on one of these statements, "Whereas public resources, including but not limited to, productive soil, clean water supply, fish and wildlife, biological diversity and a stable climate are being harmed by unsustainable forest practices on state and privately managed forestlands in Oregon." This is nonsense.

Let's discuss the facts regarding sustainability:

- According to the Oregon Forest Resource Institute's publication Oregon Forest Facts 2017-2018, Oregon's private forestland, where most timber harvest happens in the state, the amount of wood harvested each year is about 75 percent of the annual timber growth on these lands. About 11 percent of the growth is offset by trees that die from causes such as fire, insects and disease. (OFRI Forest Facts, 2017-2018 edition). This results in an annual increase in volume on private lands of about 14 percent above sustainability.
- Due to our active management, the trees on private land in this state are, with few exceptions, healthy and productive. The more the trees grow, the more carbon dioxide is being converted to oxygen. This net growth is a tremendous benefit to offset global warming. I believe the private forestland owners in this state deserve a thank you for their contributions.
- This bill also states there is a lack of biodiversity on our private lands. As you look at the family forestland owners in this state, each of us have different landowner objectives. These differences in objectives for economics, scenery, older stands, wildlife, etc., naturally provide a wide range of biodiversity.

Oregon Small Woodlands Association 187 High Street NE, Suite 208, Salem, OR 97301
Phone: (503) 588-1813 Fax: (503) 588-1970 Web: www.oswa.org

If Oregonians want to learn about sustainability, I suggest they talk to the private landowners in this state. Many are living and working on properties that have been in their family for generations and/or making plans for passing the property on to future generations. Each generation strives to make a living while at the same time, leaving the land to future generations in a better condition than when they received it. These are the Oregonian's that truly understand forest sustainability and who should be thanked for your clean air, water, fish and wildlife as well as forest products you all enjoy daily.

Lastly, I want to emphasize the importance of understanding our forestlands not only need to be ecologically and socially sustainable, but economically sustainable as well. There are many ongoing costs to managing forestland, be it for property taxes, fire assessments, ongoing road maintenance, stand management, etc. If this bill were passed, many of our properties would no longer be economically viable. This bill has a triple effect:

- The bill would set substantial portions of our land off limits to management and harvesting,
- Due to the built in bureaucratic requirements, the bill would decrease our ability to quickly respond to market opportunities.
- The bill would increase our management costs substantially.

Many of our family forestland owners nurture their forests for decades to use the harvest proceeds to supplement their retirement, my wife and I included. This bill would have a huge impact on our retirement accounts and most importantly will jeopardize the economic viability of our forestland.

I urge you to stop this bill right here. There is no place in our society to attack fellow Oregonians that work tirelessly to do the right thing in managing their forestland, raising their families and making positive contributions to our society.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Rick Barnes, President
Oregon Small Woodlands Association