

HB3226 TESTIMONY OF GREG PETERSON P.E.
MARCH 30, 2017

I am Greg Peterson, Corvallis. I own a 60 acre tree farm and I'm here today because I see HB 3226 as a serious legislative over-reach without scientific basis, and as a thinly veiled attempt to erase decades of hard work by small woodland families like mine, who often work dawn to dusk in the hope of working with nature to build a family legacy. I have personally put in 30 years of hard work growing a tree stand which was intended to pay for my grandson's college and medical costs as well. If HB3226 passes, how will I explain that there will be nothing for him?

HB3226 tries to create an unfounded hysteria that the FPA is out of touch with science and the environment. In fact, the opposite is true, as thousand of professional foresters, engineers, regulators, & researchers work hard every day to generate & validate the science behind the FPA and they continuously exchange best current practice ideas with landowners. Are we to disregard the work of these highly qualified professionals and instead rely on the erroneous & misleading statements found in HB3226?

I'm a registered professional engineer with 45 years experience with all aspects of environmental engineering and water resources. I believe that the FPA does an excellent job of managing Oregon forests, as it provides clean water, excellent habitat for fish and wildlife, and protects the community. While some issues are complex, the FPA had input from hundreds of experts and provides workable solutions that meet regulatory requirements.

I am also a licensed herbicide applicator, as herbicides are essential to manage noxious weeds & invasive species. I am impressed with the rigorous science behind herbicide testing, labeling, handling, and application rules. I strongly believe that compliance with existing laws, which are based on solid science and the expertise of thousands of experts, already adequately provide the necessary safeguards to landowners, applicators, the public, and the environment.

HB3226 challenges the very feasibility of private forest ownership, as it contains many of the extreme restrictive clauses that now burden forestry in Washington and California. These are in place not because they have better science or know better practices, but because they allowed the politics of a few uninformed idealists to trump science and kill all incentive for properly managed forestland. The FPA already provides not only clean water but also addresses cultural resources, desired future conditions, stream/river protection, fish & wildlife habitat, road construction, and many other issues mentioned in HB3226, but does so much more credibly.

Federal forest management is a terrible model to follow, causing harvest levels to drop by 90% in the past 18 years, leading to severe hardships for local school funding and rural communities. This would only worsen with HB3226, as funds from private forest harvests would drop precipitously. Federal forests operators often lack funding for controlling noxious weed and invasive species, causing unusable areas and creating a perpetual

seed source affecting neighboring landowners. The USF&W's spotted owl recovery plan has three facets; 1)protect existing high quality habitat, 2)revitalize ecosystems thru active management, & 3)reduce barred owl competition. The Feds don't have any personal skin in the game to feel the effect of locking up high quality stands, rarely get funds for active forest management, and have only begun to deal with the barred owl. Small private forests already improve habitat by longer harvest cycles, and do active management by thinning/fuels reduction to improve stand quality and reduce fire risk.

Some of the more ludicrous features of HB3226 include;

Ludicrous claim of HB 3226	Comment
Need 150 ft wide buffers each side	No additional shade is provided by buffers more than 50' wide and no shade is provide by buffers on north bank
Intermittent streams need buffers	Intermediate streams are dry in summer, thus shade is not relevant
Federal forests are unable to provide for spotted owl recovery, making significant contributions from non-federal forest lands essential	The federal forests needs to first demonstrate full implementation of all facets of the USF&W spotted own recovery plan, before it is validated. Only then should they consider non-federal forest purchases.
The lack of coordination among private, state, and federal forestland owners caused detrimental cumulative effects to water quality and wildlife habitat	Forest land owners do regularly co-ordinate in many ways. I am next door to OSU Research Forests and we usually talk monthly and co-ordinate efforts on selected tasks. There is no detrimental cumulative effects to water quality or wildlife habitat from either their or our forests.
The FPA fails to regulate the cumulative effects of industrial forest practices ^{and} has caused significant deterioration in the ability of many watersheds to meet state and federal goals for water quality and wildlife habitat	Temperature is the primary forest water quality issue. ODF's Ripstream study sought to study stream temperature change through harvests with riparian buffers. They collected 9% to 30% of the planned data, so BOF members and professionals called it a failed study. During unusually hot & dry years, the severely limited data set showed an average 0.5°C (0.9°F) temporal & spatial rise compared to unharvested sites, but returned to pre-harvest temperature 300m downstream. Other research showed that such minor increases in light and temperature benefit fish.

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Productive soil, clean water supply, fish & wildlife, biological diversity, and a stable climate are harmed by unsustainable forest practices on state and private forestlands	I know of no example of any private small woodland harvest negatively impacting soil productivity, clean water supply, fish & wildlife, or biological diversity. See comments below regarding carbon sequestration and water quality.
The FPA has changed little in 30 years, protection of public resources fall far below the standards adopted by the scientific community, federal government, neighboring states, and far below current best practices	The FPA gathered input from hundreds of experts and reflects prevailing views of science and best. See comments below regarding water quality. See neighboring states & current best practice comments above.
Clearcutting, short rotations, the conversion of natural forests to tree plantations, construction of new logging roads and the application of chemical pesticides and fertilizers generate costs to other economic sectors and burden state and local governments with unreimbursed costs	Few "natural" forests are harvested today, with the vast majority of forestland being managed for yields at or below sustained yield. The FPA addresses road construction, with professional engineers often used for designing the more challenging sites. I have yet to see evidence that the application of pesticides and fertilizers within the label directions and ODA requirements burdened state and local governments with unreimbursed costs.
Industrial forest practices create risks that jeopardize public health and safety, including public water supplies from clearcutting and forest chemicals, exposure to unsafe levels of drifting pesticides, greater wildfire susceptibility of and greatly increased potential for landslides.	Portland is the only US city that does not treat its public water supply and Oregon rural residents are prohibited from drinking untreated surface water. Any skin exposure can be mitigated with washing the affected area. I am unaware of any water supply risk due to FPA harvests or chemical application within the label. Wildfire and landslide risk are discussed below.
State and private forestland management fails to adequately provide for the complex late successional and old-growth forests and riparian zones	The first 20 ft of riparian zones are not harvested, with the remainder selectively thinned or not harvested. These zones create late successional forests, usually as a mixture of hardwood, conifers, and invasive species/brush.

Ludicrous claim of HB 3226	Comment
<p>ODF&W found that most private forestlands are managed intensively for timber values, using short rotations that limit development of late successional habitat</p>	<p>Small private woodlands usually have long rotations of 50-70 years, with riparian buffers having a much longer life. Such stands require active management to reduce fuel load, thin trees, and to strengthen the stand.</p>
<p>Industrial forest clearcutting and timber plantations represent one of Oregon's largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions and undermine climate resiliency by increasing the frequency and severity of wildfires, insect infestations and landslides</p>	<p>Industrial or other forestland are not mentioned in DEQ's <u>Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report</u> and does not undermine climate resiliency. Short rotation forest are more effective in sequestering carbon than older stands, which provide less harvested wood/Ac-Yr, more wood rot, and are more fire-prone. Private forest rotation cycles are far less prone to wildfires & insects and sequester more carbon than older stands. Landslide causes are site-specific, requiring inspection of history, soils, & drainage. Its impossible to generalize whether mature tree roots help stabilize slopes or whether the added tree weight may be a cause.</p>
<p>Federal, private and state-owned forests can play a vital role in sequestering carbon</p>	<p>Forest already play a vital role in sequestering carbon, with short rotation forests more effective than long rotation stands.</p>
<p>Modernizing the FPA will benefit the economy, including; more labor-intensive forest practices, reductions in the costs of soil erosion and water filtration, reductions in adverse impacts to fish and wildlife, scenery and recreational resources and increased opportunities for landowners to diversify land management practices and take advantage of emerging conservation and ecosystem service markets</p>	<p>We compete in a global market and to impose rules that are purposefully restrictive or labor intensive significantly raises the cost of doing business, so our forests can soon be uncompetitive and rural Oregon economies will be in a worse death spiral. Riparian buffers and other FPA erosion controls have significantly reduced soil erosion and any impact on water filtration. There are no adverse impacts to fish & wildlife, and temporal & spatial temperature change benefit fish. "Emerging conservation and ecosystem service markets" are a pipe dream and won't replace forestry in rural communities. Prairie City, John Day, Lakeview, Burns and other communities hit hard times when federal forest harvests were drastically cut in the 1990's, and these will only worsen with HB3226.</p>

I hope that you will also find HB3226 without merit and not support this bill.

Greg Peterson PE

