

From: Nils Christoffersen
To: [JWMNR Exhibits](#)
Subject: Full Funding for FFRP
Date: Wednesday, April 05, 2017 8:54:25 AM
Attachments: [FFRP Support Letter - WR - March 2017.pdf](#)

Please accept the attached letter from Wallowa Resources expressing our strong support for the Federal Forest Restoration Program (FFRP). We urge the Joint Committee on Ways and Means to endorse full funding of this program.

This FFRP is providing important investments into federal forest management and local collaborative capacity. These investments are critical to addressing significant forest health and fire risks, and to the revitalization of rural communities across eastern Oregon.

Eastern Oregon has a surplus of natural and human capital and we are failing to invest in it. As you know, community, economic and environmental health go hand in hand over here.. Investment in the stewardship of our forests, watersheds and rangelands creates local jobs, while providing food, fiber, clean water and clean air for the State and the Nation. These jobs are critical to our rural communities, particularly our isolated rural communities, whose inherent economic advantage is in natural resource stewardship - not information, technology and services.

The FFRP is important - its helping to overcome interest-based divisions and polarization that is undermining social discourse and the foundation of a well-functioning democracy; and its investing in the critical state-community-federal partnerships needed to insure the federal lands (which account for over 60% of Oregon's forests) benefit from the collective resources needed for forest restoration and stewardship. If we fail to renew, and fully fund the FFRP, we will fail to capitalize on the foundation built over the past four years for accelerated pace and scale of restoration.

State funds have allowed us to keep momentum on local projects such as the Lower Joseph Creek Project. Both Wallowa County and a local non-profit – Wallowa Resources – funded and contracted work to jumpstart this 100K acre project. State funds filled critical gaps to complete data collection and keep the project on its timeline.

In the aftermath of the harsh 2015 fire season, ODF employees assisted with pre-sale layout on 4 fire-salvage timber sales on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest (WWNF) and one more on the Umatilla National Forest (UNF). All of these timber sales have been sold and total 26 mmbf of volume. ODF crews also assisted on 9 other “green” timber sale units on the WWNF and UNF. The use of state funds to increase the pace of implementation on fire salvage sales is critical to recovering timber value, supporting logging jobs, retaining infrastructure, and maintaining safe public access into our public lands.

Looking ahead, ODF could help increase the pace of implementation on the Lower Joseph project. Under the current USFS plan, the first timber sale would be offered in 2019. We would encourage the state to enter into a Good Neighbor Agreement with the USFS to reduce the timeline to achieve actual results on the ground. As we understand this tool, ODF would use staff to administer USFS timber sales and other forest restoration contracted work.

In northeastern Oregon, where wildfire and insect outbreaks readily cross over from federal land to private land, state investment is a proactive approach to reducing risk to private lands. Timber sales and other contracted work support local jobs in our natural resource based economy. Based on the urgent need both in our forests and our communities, we ask for your support of ODF's Federal Forest Restoration package.



Maintain the FFRP and help keep rural Oregonians working. Invest in us as the stewards of our natural resources and the engines of economic health and community well-being.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nils D Christoffersen

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Nils D Christoffersen
Executive Director
Wallowa Resources

401 NE First St, Suite A
Enterprise, OR 97828
Phone (541) 426 8053 x25
Cell (541) 398 0887
www.wallowaresources.org



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March 21, 2017

TO: Senator Richard Devlin, Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Representative Nancy Nathanson, Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Ways and Means

SUBJECT: Full funding for the Oregon Department of Forestry Federal Forest Restoration Program

I am writing on behalf of Wallowa Resources to express our strong support for full funding of the Oregon Department of Forestry Federal Forest Restoration Program at \$4.4 million in the 2017-2019 biennium budget. This investment, as demonstrated in the last two biennium, is critical to increasing the pace, scale, and effectiveness of restoration of Oregon's federal forests.

The collective vision and goals which guided forest management in Oregon and across the USA for most of the 20th Century dissolved towards the end of the 1980's. Since that time we've been operating without a compass – without agreement on what goods and services we want from our forests, and without an accepted framework to evaluate the inherent trade-offs and reach consensus.

By the start of the 21st Century, Oregon once again provided leadership and innovation – with early forms of forest collaboration emerging in both the SW and NE of the state. Since that time, forest collaboration has spread across the state and country as the leading model to address the conflict, polarization and gridlock in forest management. Collaboration is not easy, and it takes time to mature. But it remains the best option available to rebuild a collective vision of forest restoration and stewardship, and forge agreement and collection action across the broad spectrum of values and interests. No other viable models or strategies are contesting this critical space.

With more than 60% of Oregon's forests under federal management (USFS and BLM), investments in conflict resolution and social agreement are critical to the economic and environmental conditions across the State. Recent research has suggested that at least 2.5 million acres of federal forestland in Eastern and Southwestern Oregon alone requires active restoration – thinning and prescribed burning – in order to restore forest health. Changes in forest management over recent decades has also resulted in the loss of much of the state's forest products infrastructure and associated jobs. The Federal Forest Restoration Program works to support the development of a sustainable forest products infrastructure that provides living wage jobs in restoration and stewardship of federal forests through collaboration, innovative partnerships, and integration of science into planning and management. The program seeks to enhance fish and wildlife habitat, reduce risk of uncharacteristic wildfire, and produce timber supply for mills and forest products companies.

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401 NE First St, Suite A
Enterprise, OR 97828
(541) 426-8053
Fax: (541) 426-9053
wallowaresources.org

Investing in people and the land for 20 years

Collaboration has led to the development of new projects that meet multiple ecological and economic objectives, increasing the number and size of projects the agencies have been able to implement. The Federal Forest Restoration Program has also facilitated improved relationships between diverse stakeholders and agency partners through investments in collaborative capacity and technical assistance. Elements of the program, including Collaborative Support Grants, provide financial resources and expertise to collaboratives that would otherwise not be available to these community led groups. These resources are essential to support the activities of forest collaboratives and contribute to building strong social agreement for forest restoration.

In the 2015-2017 budget, the legislature invested \$5 million in this unique program and expanded it statewide. That investment paid off and has been leveraged more than 2:1 by the U.S. Forest Service in priority treatment areas across Oregon. As a result, a 16 percent increase in restoration-related jobs and a 14 percent increase in federal timber harvest have occurred across eastern Oregon since the program's inception. In the next biennium we have the opportunity to build upon these successes by incorporating the program in the ODF base budget and developing and implementing the Good Neighbor Authority agreement that Governor Brown recently signed. The increased investment and use of new tools will support additional partnerships between state and federal land managers and enable greater returns and benefits to the State of Oregon and participating partners.

We appreciate the Department of Forestry's implementation of the Federal Forest Restoration Program over the past two biennium and strongly encourage you to continue to support this groundbreaking effort. Full funding for the Federal Forest Restoration Program at \$4.4 million in the 2017-2019 biennium is integral to improving the health and resilience of our federal forest lands, creating and sustaining restoration and stewardship jobs in rural communities, protecting unique habitat for fish and wildlife, and restoring public lands for the benefit of all Oregonians.

Thank you for supporting this important program.

Sincerely,



Nils D Christoffersen
Executive Director
Wallowa Resources