

NANCY HATHAWAY <nancyhath@comcast.net>

I am amazed that HB 2656 deserves a hearing. It comes with no justification, no science, and no consideration to those who have devoted their lives to growing sustainable forests with benefits for all Oregonians. It ignores all the efforts of the Board of Forestry, which labors to interpret science into rule-making, and the Dept. of Forestry, which carries out and enforces these standards. And, most of all it ignores the efforts of thousands of individuals who daily work to grow a crop while following these rules. I am one of those individuals.

Not one of us who owns timber wants our forests to mimic Federal forests which cannot prescribe burn, spray Bt, or harvest without going thru public processes which delay any possible positive action. My hunting experience in Eastern Oregon this fall showed me the effects of insect damage which was not able to be sprayed without public approval. The insects then continued to decimate hundreds of acres. Now the forest experience is dead trees which are of no use to wildlife with neither food nor shelter available. 86-90% of forest fires are on unmanaged Federal land.

Two weeks ago I visited the former town of Paradise, California. The color I would use to describe Paradise is black. Concrete steps lead to brick fireplaces-everything else totally burned. Shopping centers burned to the ground with charred shopping carts drifting in the parking lot. Burned out vehicles with melted tires everywhere. Mature logs lie in decks, but plenty of blackened trees remain standing. I wonder to what extent these standing trees will survive due to stress and possible insect infestation. This is not a scenario we want in Oregon, yet with virtually no management of forests this could easily happen here. In fact, we could reduce our two-season year of (1) rain and (2) wildfire to one total season of wildfire.

Carbon emissions from wildfires will offset any gains legislators hope to achieve thru cap and trade. Typically, as a small woodlands owner, I spend thousands of dollars every year on the purchase of herbicides to control invasive and non-native species. This cost does not include my free labor. I also remove lower branches of trees when possible. To let junk greenery build up and touch low hanging branches is the definition of ladder fuels. Some brush, such as Scotch broom, has a high oil content which makes it especially lethal when torched.

The stupidity of this bill reveals the intent of the authors. It's a statement of "I want what I want despite the cost to others and I have no basis in fact."

Nancy Hathaway  
3230 NW Garfield Ave.  
Corvallis, OR 97330