



Oregon Small Woodlands Association  
187 High Street NE, Suite 208  
Salem, OR 97301

March 12, 2019

House Energy & Environment Committee

Re: HB 2656

Chair Helm and members of this committee,

My name is Mike Barsotti. I am the current president of Oregon Small Woodlands Association (OSWA). Our association, representing Oregon's family forest landowners, is opposed to HB 2656.

OSWA opposes this bill because it flies in the face Oregon's vision for its forests as articulated in its forest regulations, land use policies, and property tax programs. These three programs complement each other for the benefit of all Oregonians.

The purpose of the Forest Practices Acts is to ensure the continuous growing and harvesting of forest trees as the leading use on privately owned land, consistent with sound management of soil, air, water, fish and wildlife resources and scenic resources, to ensure the continuous benefits of those resources for future generations of Oregonians. Oregon's land use laws have effectively kept Oregon's forests as forests, and the state's forest property tax special assessments programs encourage landowners to grow and harvest timber.

I own and live on forestland near Lyons, and have my forest certified under the American Tree Farm System's internationally recognized standards of sustainability. Like most of our organization's members, I continually attend workshops and tours to increase my knowledge on how best to manage forests for the mix of values they provide landowners and society.

I cannot find any data to support the crippling limitations this bill would put on landowners who are sustainably managing their forests.

This past year I clear-cut a portion of my forest, sending 45 loads of logs to local saw mills; build and rock a road; and used herbicides to control two invasive species, Himalayan blackberries and Scotch broom. All three of these activities would be prohibited under this bill as my property is in the North Santiam watershed that supplies drinking water for Salem and Stayton. Looking at DEQ's *Oregon Subbasins with Drinking Water Intakes* map, most landowner in Western Oregon would also be impacted by this bill.

None of my activities have impacted the water quality of the watershed. It did create a forest opening important for a number of wildlife species. Forest openings, early seral forests, provide cover, foraging and nesting habitat required for song bird habitat. Early seral forests are just as important for wildlife as old-growth forests (Swanson et al. 2014). According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Breeding Bird Survey, early seral-associated species such as the rufous hummingbird and orange-crowned warbler continue to decline at a rate of 2 to 4 percent per year, largely because federal forest management is focusing on old growth.

My logging activities also provided high quality lumber, local jobs and additional tax revenue for the state.

OSU Forestry Extension foresters in partnership with members of the Linn County OSWA Chapter conducted a Douglas-fir uneven age research project to see if this management strategy was a viable alternative to the traditional even age Douglas-fir management. The study only reinforced the fact that Douglas-fir doesn't do well in even partial shade.

HB 2656 is bad for Oregon.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Barsotti". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mike Barsotti, President  
Oregon Small Woodlands Association