

## **SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

**SB 5518**

**Department of Forestry**

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To:	Ways and Means Full Committee
From:	Natural Resources Subcommittee
Carrier:	Senator Taylor

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SB 5518 is the budget bill for the Oregon Department of Forestry.

The bill includes three distinct components: the biennial budget for the Department of Forestry, a Special Purpose Appropriation to the Emergency Board for allocation to the Department of Forestry for severity resources costs, and a General Fund appropriation to the Department of Forestry in the current 2019-21 biennium, for the payment of catastrophic wildfire insurance premiums for the 2021 fire season.

The budget for the Department of Forestry increases by \$25.5 million, all funds, from the current service level. This is a 6.1% increase. The budget makes investments of \$5.2 million and 19 positions for fire organization sustainability and modernization as well as \$9.1 million and 31 positions in federal forest restoration and all-lands stewardship.

A \$1.7 million General Fund appropriation is included in the budget to fund the ongoing work of the department to contain and eradicate Sudden Oak Death in Oregon. Funding is also included to expand the agency's diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives; establishing two positions dedicated to this purpose.

The budget aligns resources and provides funding for investments in the modernization and expansion of administrative capacity including financial, budgeting, reporting, and information technologies. These budgetary actions are resultant from recommendations made by MGO consulting in response to the review of the agency's financial position and processes related to the Fire Protection program.

The special purpose General Fund appropriation made in the bill to the Emergency Board of \$14.0 million for severity resources is a \$10.0 million increase in funding for these activities.

The \$3,816,424 General Fund appropriation included in the bill for the 2019-2021 biennium allows the agency to reimburse the Department of Administrative services for the cost of securing the catastrophic wildfire insurance contract for the 2021 fire season.

The Natural Resources Subcommittee recommends SB 5518 be amended by the –2 amendment and be reported out do pass, as amended.