

Written testimony Oregon State Legislature in support of HB 2357 to eliminate funding for Oregon Forest Resources Institute

The following written testimony expands on my oral presentation given 3/2/21 before the Oregon State Legislature:

Thank you, Chair Witt and committee members, for taking my testimony today. My name is Elizabeth (Betsy) Herbert. I live in Corvallis, Oregon. I have a Ph.D. in Environmental Studies from the University of California, Santa Cruz. My area of expertise is forest management for protection of drinking water. My 2004 Ph.D. dissertation analyzed forest practices on the west coast of California, Oregon & Washington. My peer-reviewed research results were published in the *J. of the American Waterworks Association* in 2007 (<https://awwa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/j.1551-8833.2007.tb07872.x>)

I urge passage of HB 2357 to defund OFRI. It is time for peer-reviewed scientific research, rather than timber industry propaganda, to inform the public about the impacts of logging to public water supplies.

As part of my dissertation research, I conducted a literature survey of science articles regarding forest practices that protect drinking water sources. On all counts, the Oregon Forest Practice rules fell short—and continue to this day—to fall far short of ensuring protected drinking water, leaving community drinking water systems to cope with degraded water supplies.

A few years before I began my research, Portland's Bull Run watershed served as a nationwide eye-opener for the impacts of logging on a public drinking water supply. Public outcry finally resulted in Federal legislation to permanently protect the Bull Run from logging.

Shortly afterward, OFRI produced a glossy report entitled, "Drinking Water & Forestry." The thrust of the report was that all forested watersheds produce high quality water, *regardless of whether they are*

*unlogged, old-growth forests or logged intensively by the timber industry*, a conclusion that defies scientific evidence.

Over the years, OFRI has published such reports that dismiss scientific findings in order to stem the growing public concern about the impacts of logging on water supplies.

Thus, OFRI has done a great public disservice to Oregonians. It is unconscionable that OFRI is paid with taxpayer dollars to put forth this kind of disinformation. Please pass HB 2357 to eliminate funding for OFRI.

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