

May 19, 2021

Chairs Reardon and Taylor and Members of the Joint Subcommittee on Natural Resources:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on SB 5518, the Oregon Department of Forestry Budget.

I am opposed to the language in the current budget that proposes changing funding for administrative costs for ODF from 100% General Fund to a 50/50 split between private landowners and the General Fund, because it eliminates the recognition that private landowners provide millions of dollars every year through in-kind resources.

I have practiced forestry for small and large landowners in Western Oregon for 46 years. In my career I have conducted numerous fuels reduction projects and participated in control of too many wildfires, starting in 1976, to list for you. Most recently I spent two days as a Local Resource Boss on the early September North Bank Fire in Coos County and three days in the same capacity on the Archie Creek Fire in Douglas County.

My ability to assist was only possible because over the many years my employers have supported the time and cost to maintain the necessary training for qualifications to fight fire. Besides the cost of training, the lost time for attention to management of lands and normal duties costs landowners. Additionally, most forest landowners of any size have equipment and the mobilization necessary to put their personnel and resources into action quickly when the wildfire bell goes off.

I have been a director for the Coos Forest Protective Association for 19 years and understand the increased costs agencies would incur if not for the support of landowners in the complete and coordinated wildfire system in place in Oregon. I recall a survey some years ago putting the value of industrial support for wildfire preparedness in excess of six million dollars annually. It seems unreasonable to shift more cost to landowners at a time when their preparedness and participation in controlling wildfires has shown to be invaluable as it was in September of 2020.

I again I urge you to oppose SB 5518 and thank you for considering my thoughts on the matter.

Sincerely,



Jim Carr, CF  
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