

Please oppose HB 2598, the Bill that defunds OFRI.

OFRI is one of the unsung heroes of Oregon's forests!

"In 1991, the Oregon Legislature created the Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) to enhance collaboration among forest scientists, public agencies, community organizations, conservation groups and forest landowners; to provide objective information about responsible forest management; and to encourage environmentally sound forest practices through training and other educational programs."

"OFRI mission-

The Oregon Forest Resources Institute is dedicated to advancing public understanding of forests, forest management and forest products, and encouraging sustainable forestry through landowner education."

"It takes collaborative support from the public, landowner and legislature to have it all: a thriving forest sector economy, a recreational playground and healthy forest ecosystems".

OFRI not only supports all of the above, I quoted it directly from their website.

Oregon Department of Forestry's mission:

"To serve the people of Oregon by protecting, managing, and promoting stewardship of Oregon's forests to enhance environmental, economic, and community sustainability."

Why would our Legislators want to take away a resource that supports ODF's mission by educating timberland owners, kids, teachers, the public with scientifically proven, fact based information on how to manage forests for sustainability?

Well, because they have an agenda to push and facts get in their way.

Oregon's timber industry is one of the most regulated industries in our Country yet Oregon is still the #1 softwood lumber and plywood producer in our Country. We know how to manage forests sustainably, in part due to OFRI. OFRI educates timberland owners about sustainable forest practices and management. There are over 65,000 small tract timberland owners in Oregon and they all know the benefits of having a resource like OFRI.

OFRI actively educates timberland owners, introduces children to nature through a hands-on forest experience, educates teachers and children from kindergarten through higher education, has resources and guides to help not only timberland owners but the public as well. OFRI is one of the unsung heroes of Oregon's forests!

If you ask me- instead of defunding OFRI, they should reform the Oregon Department of Forestry so that it can work effectively for the best interest of Oregon and our forests, like it's supposed to.

Legislators are trying to defund OFRI, an organization funded solely by the Timber Harvest Tax. OFRI is not paid for by the taxpayers. OFRI only gets money from the Forest Harvest Tax.

HB 2598 would redirect the portion of the Forest Harvest Tax that funds OFRI to the Oregon Forest Land Protection Fund AND assesses an additional 3-8% severance tax on the value of harvested timber.

Why?

They want to silence scientifically proven, fact based information that is made available to the public so there is no opposition to their twisted truths and propaganda.

Defunding OFRI also takes away K-12 forest education that teach thousands of kids each year with hands-on education in a forest that aligns with Oregon's educational curriculum. This is not what is important to them. They want to perpetuate false narratives and twisted truths to push their agenda so they can continue to lock-up our forests.

The true stewards of the forests are those of us who manage them, work in them, nurture and take care of them. We have more and healthier trees now than 100 years ago. For every 1 tree harvested 4 are planted. Out of 300 healthy trees only 1 can be harvested. These are only 2 laws which are a part of managing our forests sustainably.

Oregon's DEQ has done studies that prove the water coming out of harvest sites is the cleanest water in any industry, you can look it up on OFRI's website. They don't want you to know this.

Oppose HB 2598