

I'm writing in support for HB 2357, in eliminating the Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) and Oregon Forest Resources Institute Fund. On August 4, 2020, The Oregonian-OPB-ProPublica published a report exposing OFRI for suppressing science on forest-carbon, downplaying the impacts of industrial forestry on Oregon's drinking water supplies, and engaging in illegal lobbying efforts to further the timber industry agenda. Many of OFRI's materials, which are distributed through television advertisements and educational materials, contain misinformation about logging practices and present the biased notion that Oregon protects the environment with landmark forestry laws.

OFRI releases many television advertisements that promote Oregon as a state with strong laws protecting our environment and communities from the impacts of clearcut logging. However, timber companies have successfully fought to keep Oregon's laws much more lenient than neighboring states. We should be collecting taxes from these harvest activities and return the money to our communities...local, county, and state levels.

Compared to our neighboring states, Washington and California, Oregon's logging laws fall short in protecting forests, watersheds and communities from old-school industrial logging and herbicide application impacts. The OPB podcast, "Timber Wars" has helped expose OFRI's role in brain-washing the public that timber industry logging is beneficial and is needed to save our economy and rural life style of Oregonians. If that were true, OFRI would welcome and embrace stronger logging regulations and safeguards to protect and conserve our landscapes and watersheds we depend on in Oregon.

OFRI is supported through our tax dollars. OFRI was originally put in place to provide unbiased information based on science. Forests are what Oregon was known for, in addition to the native beaver. We no longer have sustainable beaver populations throughout there historical range because of changes in the forest and stream habitats. These changes are not natural changes, but man made changes based on money and power. It is time to end OFRI and use my tax dollars in a more productive and unbiased method to manage our forested lands and watersheds for current and future generations. If you are going to allow millions of dollars of taxpayers money continue to feed this dysfunctional machine, you may need to ask yourself why you, as my representatives, turn a blind eye to the mis-management.

I am not asking to end timber harvest. I am asking for your support to end the mis-information share and use science and best management practices within our watersheds. There are numerous "better ways" to use my tax dollars to keep timber harvest into the future, secure safe and sustainable watersheds available to us humans, and provide habitat for our native wildlife, fish, and plants.

I ask that you support HB 2357, so harvest taxes don't continue to fund OFRI's propaganda.