



TUALATIN RIVERKEEPERS®

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March 1, 2021

House Agriculture and Natural Resource Committee
Oregon House of Representatives
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Submitted Online

RE: Support House Bill 2357 and Eliminate OFRI

Chair Witt and Committee Members,

Tualatin Riverkeepers is a community-based organization that protects and restores the Tualatin River watershed. We build watershed stewardship through engagement, advocacy, restoration, access, and education. We are writing to request your support for HB 2357, in eliminating the Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) and Oregon Forest Resources Institute Fund. The headwaters of the Tualatin River are in the coast range and a large percentage of the land in those areas are owned by industrial timber operations. Additionally, the Tualatin River serves as a drinking water source for over 350,000 people. These large industrial forest activities negatively impact water quality and native migratory fish, and these impacts are being ignored or downplayed by OFRI.

This summer OFRI was exposed by *The Oregonian-OPB-ProPublica* 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 curriculum, contain misinformation and skew the facts to support the timber industry. All of this is done with public money and must be and can be stopped by supporting HB 2357.

Sadly, even though Oregonians have been fighting for better forest protections for decades, Oregon's forest laws still fall far short of our neighboring states in protecting our forest resources and communities from the impacts of clearcut logging. Industrial logging practices have degraded drinking water supplies caused by logging and associated chemical spray and road building in many Oregon communities. Additionally, industrial forestry impacts the quality of the water for our native migratory fish species

including threatened Winter Steelhead, Coho, and Pacific lamprey. Currently, due to OFRI's influence and improper lobbying, Oregon's forest management is not based on unbiased science and it puts communities' health and our native fish at risk.

OFRI spends millions of dollars of taxpayer money to present biased information to the public. Oregonians deserve forest management that relies on unbiased science and that puts the safety of their drinking water first. I ask that you support HB 2357, to get rid of OFRI and redirect forest tax money to benefit the state of Oregon.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AS' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Ashley Short
Tualatin Riverkeeper & In-House Counsel
Tualatin Riverkeepers
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