

Submitter: Jack Duggan
On Behalf Of: Oregon forests
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery
Measure: SB1501
RE: SB 1501

My name is Jack Duggan. I hold a degree in Forestry and am OSU Extension certified as a Land Steward. I live on and care for my family forest land of over 300 acres.

I am pleased that the Private Forest Accord (PFA) has prompted attention to the 50-year-old Oregon Forest Practices Act (OFPA). However, I am opposed to fast-tracking legislation to update and re-energize the OFPA. After 50 years what is missing from 50-year-old thinking will take more than 8-9 months to fix.

While the PFA does a great deal to direct the legislature, it is not totally sufficient to address legislation that will set the standard for forest management over the next 50 years. The situation today is much different than it was in 1972. Industrial owners are now primarily absentee investors who have no stake in our forests, only in the dollars gained from timber harvest. Managing for harvest alone is not sufficient forest management to ensure future generations will look at Oregon as the Timber State. Government agencies, predominately federal, also hold large tracts of forest land in our State and are managing forests according to a political agenda. Only small, non-industrial landowners like my family are working in balance with their forest lands, often against great odds.

Take the time to talk to the people, the people in each of your districts who own forest land, work in natural resources, hunt, fish and use Oregon's forests in so many ways other than timber harvest.

Lest you get me wrong, I am not opposed to timber harvest. I have overseen three harvests on our land, the first in 1974 and I was proud to work under the "new" OFPA. It is the appropriateness of the prescriptions that I question.

The PFA, while nudging toward each issue, fails to address the distinct geography, terrain and weather of Oregon's different regions. You cannot manage forests in Eastern Oregon the same as in Southwest Oregon, nor the Coast, nor the Willamette Valley, etc. Oregon has distinct landscapes and the OFPA should address those differences. In 1972 the rules applied equally across the State, a mistake that should be corrected. The most contentious prescription, clearcuts and re-planting as a genetically singular species, is applicable in only a few places in our State, but is allowed statewide with significant impacts seen here in southern Oregon.

The other major issue to be addressed is biodiversity. Again, the PFA sort of hints at biodiversity, but it doesn't go far enough. Planting identical species of the same age and same genetics does not provide the habitat necessary for much of our wildlife, is more prone to fire, and causes significant erosion and loss of surface soils for five to ten years after harvest. Some places this works and I have seen those places, but it is rarely an appropriate prescription for managing all of the forests. Without the varied flora and fauna of our forests the growing tourist industry will leave.

I am a geographical luddite only because I live too far to get conventional internet access, so can't do virtual meetings. However, I am willing to expand on this issue should anyone wish to contact me by phone at 541-899-7310, or via email.

Thank you for your attention.