

02/06/23

Representative Ken Helm, Chairman  
House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Water and Natural Resources  
900 Court Street, NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Opposition to HB 3019

Chair Helm and Members of the Committee.

My name is Isabelle Lafferty and I am a small woodland owner in Lane County. I sustainably manage about 220 acres for timber production. Thank you for allowing me to testify in opposition to HB 3019 which would practically end the Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) by taking two-thirds of the funding and changing how it operates.

***I have personally benefitted from public workshops funded by OFRI that taught me valuable skills to better manage my families timber land while maintaining habitat for the many animals that call our land home. OFRI is an invaluable resource to us small woodland owners of Oregon.***

***I have volunteered in OFRI funded forest education programs for local middle schools and can't stress enough the importance of keeping our youth interested in our forests her in Oregon and fostering a desire to protect and responsibly manage this precious resource.***

- OFRI has played a vital role in fostering public awareness through scientific research, public workshops on forest management, K-12 forest education programs, promotion of best practices on Oregon's forests.
- To defund OFRI would deprive Oregon school children and teachers of a valuable educational resource.
- Without OFRI, **Oregon Envirothon** will cease to serve its students immediately and Oregon will become the only U.S. State to shut down their Envirothon Program. They provide 90% of Oregon Envirothon's funding and our only staff through in-kind contribution.
- OFRI produces relevant and well-researched in-depth special reports on topics like water quality, carbon storage, harvest methods, wildlife habitat and wildfire.
- We must always support the education of future generations. They are our future." OFRI has done just that. They have helped us educate future generations and they need to continue to do so.
- Oregon Conservation districts value OFRI as it works through partnerships to develop information and resources and serve as a central clearing house for access to information about Oregon's forests.
- OFRI supports the WOWnet Program-Women Owning Woodlands. Forty percent of Oregon's small woodlands are owned by women. WOWnet gives them a seat at the table and a voice in the room.
- Forest landowners need education, especially the estimated 60,000 mostly rural family forestland owners who own between 10 and 5,000 acres and who make up roughly one half of private forestland ownership in the state.
- Forest management is extremely complex. Not only are we continually learning about the interconnection between all the ecological components that make up a health, sustainable forest, but we need to continually work to better balance the economic and social factors

with these ecological components. OFRI, with its public and landowner educational programs, workshops, is an important asset for landowners to educate themselves in these complex times

I understand the role my tree farm plays in contributing to Oregon's clean water, clean air, and wildlife habitat. OFRI is a great asset to small woodland owners like me while also assisting to educate the public regarding forestry and advocating for the biodiversity of healthy forests. We appreciate that the Oregon Legislature created OFRI in 1991.

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Landowners and conservationists came together in 2020 to pass the Private Forest Accord. There is a great amount of information that needs to be disseminated to both landowners and the public regarding the PFA. Without OFRI, who will make that happen?

To defund OFRI would deprive Oregon school children and teachers of a valuable educational resource. We must always support the education of future generations. They are our future." OFRI has done just that. I am thankful they have helped us educate future generations and they need to continue to do so.

Please vote against HB 3019 or any bill to eliminate or change OFRI.

Sincerely,

***Isabelle Lafferty***