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| Submitter: | Rich Fairbanks |
| On Behalf Of: | Prescription for Safety |
| Committee: | Senate Committee On Natural Resources |
| Measure: | SB530 |

SB 530

I feel qualified to speak about carbon sequestration by forests because of my background.

I held various positions in the Forest Service fire organization, including Interagency Hotshot Crew Foreman, Suppression Crew Foreman, Division Supervisor, and others.

Retiring after a 32-year career with the Forest Service, I worked 6 years for The Wilderness Society, leading their California fire program. I currently own a small forest management company.

I studied fire behavior as a graduate student (UW fire science program 1979-80).
I am a Forest Service certified silviculturist, having completed a year of post-baccalaureate study in tree physiology and related subjects.

Most of the forests in Southern and Eastern Oregon are now young, fairly dense stands of conifer. When I started fighting fires in 1972, there were still large stands of wild forest, most supporting old growth. While my colleagues and I were putting out surface fires in those stands, scientists were discovering that surface fires kept those dry forests healthy, fire resilient and a good carbon sink.

Most of the carbon storage in dry forests is concentrated in the boles of a few large trees. Those trees got big because diameter is a function of spacing. Spacing was kept low in these forests by frequent, low severity fires and to a lesser extent by various insects and disease.
Such forests support sparse understories and a few big carbon-rich trees per acre.

If we are going to sequester carbon in southern Oregon, we need to do controlled burning on nonindustrial private forest lands, to restore the regime of frequent, low intensity disturbance. Property owners who wish to do controlled burning need resources.

Support for these burns should include funding for:
Engines

Crews
Science - meteorologists, fire planners and fuels specialists

Landowners are hungry for information. The bill should sponsor classes:
Burn boss
Basic fire behavior
Fire weather

In summary, if you want to sequester carbon, you need frequent surface fire, long rotation forestry and a fire permeable rural forest.