

Submitter: Sheila Dooley

On Behalf  
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and  
Water

Measure: HB2192

Allowing additional dwellings on forest land unnecessarily increases the risk of fire. Mosier, where I live in the Columbia Gorge, is an area of extreme fire risk. The risk is increasing with climate change as the area gets drier and hotter. Firefighting is already difficult due to the steep slopes and wind. A fire that starts on one property can easily move onto surrounding properties that are not in a fire district. This was the case in August 2020 when the Mosier Creek fire burned nearly 1,000 acres and involved 800 firefighters.

Firefighters had to work to save homes rather than concentrating on containing the fire.

Due to climate change, wildfires are growing more extreme and wildfire seasons are getting longer. Much of Wasco County's forestland is located in high and extremely high fire risk areas. According to the Oregon Department of Forestry, 96% of the fires in areas served by ODF in Wasco and Hood River counties are human caused.

There are large tracts of forestland near where we live that have no one on site living on them or managing them on a regular basis. There is not enough work involved to justify a dwelling, especially in the summer and winter months. Conifer trees take 60 to 80 years to mature unlike crops on farmland.

We have already been evacuated 3 times due to human caused fires that started on forest land. By allowing someone to replace a nonexistent dwelling, this measure appears to be nothing more than another attempt to undermine Oregon's land use laws, laws which the people of Oregon have supported at the ballot box again and again.

Please oppose HB 2192.

Thank you.

Sheila Dooley  
Mosier, Oregon