

LINN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



WILL TUCKER
Commissioner

SHERRIE SPRENGER
Commissioner

ROGER NYQUIST
Commissioner

*Linn County Courthouse
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DARRIN L. LANE
Administrative Officer

February 24, 2023

Hello Chair Golden, Senators Girod, Prozanski, Brock-Smith and Taylor:

The Forest Trust Land Advisory Committee (FTLAC) have been meeting for years to protect the interest of the counties in the management of the Oregon State Forest. The 15 Counties that make up the larger Council of Forest Trust Land Counties (CFTLC) and the FTLAC have been trying for many years to affect the management of our forest lands in our advisory role. The input of FTLAC has not been included in the HCP process nor the input from experts we have brought to the table. Our economics and community stability are at risk with no consideration of our perspectives and needs.

In Linn County, we believe that there was a contract and the State has not upheld their side of the deal. We believe these lands are held in trust by the State for the benefit of the County that deeded the land. This bill would give counties an option we do not have today.

Regardless, the Board of Forestry (BOF) continues to push for a 70-year Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) despite our concerns. The technical experts we have retained have proposed changes and prepared HCP plan alternatives. Without considering our input to the HCP, they are moving forward which will have a huge effect on resulting harvests/revenues for generations to come.

As the BOF has worked on the HCP, the Department of Forestry has made output projections which continue to plummet. Forest harvest levels were once based upon sustainable harvest goals which now looks to be less than a third of that. Here are the recent projections for post HCP harvest levels – (the numbers are Millions of Board Feet):

2018 Business Case Analysis of a possible HCP	~250 MMBF
2022 Draft Environmental Impact Statement	~226 MMBF
2023 Modeling of the Implementation Plan	~165 to 182 MMBF

The revenue from the sale of logs is the smaller part of the impact that timber has on our communities; there are mills, transportation, restocking the forest, thinning, road construction, logging, plywood, mass timber, secondary jobs with paper, pellets and shaving...the millions the counties get directly from timber sales is much smaller than the value of the jobs and the taxes the companies and employees pay to a county and state in total in payroll and property taxes.

I ask you to support SB 795 which allows for the return of County lands back to the counties if they believe that they can produce a greater permanent value than the BOF is doing today.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Will Tucker", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Will Tucker
Commissioner