



**SOCIETY OF  
AMERICAN  
FORESTERS**  
OREGON

Blue Mountain • Capitol • Central Oregon • Central Oregon Community College • Columbia  
Gorge • Coos • Emerald • Marys Peak • Mount Hood Community College • Oregon State  
University • Portland • Shasta-Cascade • Siskiyou • Tillamook-Clatsop • Umpqua

PO Box 82836, Portland, OR 97282 • (503) 224-8046 • [www.forestry.org/oregon](http://www.forestry.org/oregon)

Chair Jama, Vice Chair Bonham, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. My name is Ed Shepard. I'm a Certified Forester and Fellow with the Society of American Foresters and serve as Co-Chair of the Oregon SAF Policy Committee. I am now retired after 38 years with the Bureau of Land Management, most recently as State Director for Oregon and Washington.

The Oregon Society of American Foresters represents nearly 700 forestry professionals across Oregon, including field foresters, researchers, educators, and administrators working in public and private sectors. We are concerned about Senate Bill 1051 and believe it is critical that Oregon's State Forester remains a forester—defined by SAF as “*a professional educated in forestry at a college or university and engaged in the science and art of forestry.*”

Our **Oregon Position Statement on Forestry Professionals as Stakeholders** urges policymakers to “*recognize the valuable perspective that trained and experienced forestry professionals can provide to better understand and address forest resource issues and related policy and management concerns.*”

Our **National Position Statement on Professionals in Natural Resource Management** states that “*land management organizations, including public agencies, must recognize the benefits from forestry professionals serving in technical, managerial, and executive positions.*”

Speaking from experience, my forestry background was essential in leading a public land management agency. It gave me credibility with staff, helped me communicate effectively with decision makers and the public, and allowed me to make decisions grounded in science and operational reality. Being a forester wasn't just about what I knew—it was about understanding the practical implications of policy on the ground. It allowed me to stand up for what was right, to interpret how new rules or funding mechanisms would affect our forests, our workforce, and our communities.

As the executive of a large public agency, I was responsible for making decisions on complex forest plans. My forestry education and experience were critical to understanding the trade-offs that are made to balance the social, economic, and ecological factors and the effects those decision have on the forests and the communities.

We are concerned that SB 1051 would significantly disrupt the relationship between the Board of Forestry and the State Forester. The State Forester would still be responsible for managing Board of Forestry lands but would no longer be accountable to the Board itself. Instead, the role would shift toward serving solely at the discretion of the Governor, raising concerns that professional forestry expertise and key decisions vulnerable to short-term political agendas rather than long-term public stewardship.

Forestry is not a partisan issue. It is a complex, evolving science. Oregon's forests deserve a leader who understands that complexity, can speak with authority and integrity, understand the implications of policy on the ground, and advocate for sound, science-based stewardship. That leader must be a forester.

Thank you for your time. I'm happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Ed Shepard, CF

Co-Chair: OSFAF Policy Committee

Please contact Amanda Sullivan-Astor, OSFAF 2025 State Chair, for any follow up discussion.

[aastor@oregonloggers.org](mailto:aastor@oregonloggers.org)