

To: Chair Senator Jama, Vice-Chair Starr, and Members of the Senate Committee on Rules

From: Bird Alliance of Oregon, Cascadia Wildlands, Oregon Wild, Sustainable Northwest, Wild Salmon Center

Date: February 13, 2026

**RE: Oregon State Forester Confirmation**

Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Starr, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we are writing regarding the appointment of Kacey KC as Oregon's State Forester.

Oregon's next State Forester must be able to meet the challenges ahead, from more frequent droughts and wildfires to extreme weather that puts Oregon's communities, clean water, healthy forests, and fish and wildlife at risk. To be effective, Oregon's State Forester will need to demonstrate expertise in fire management, ecological forest management, and the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss. They will need to be a skilled manager with a strong track record of transparency in decision-making, a willingness to listen to all perspectives, and experience creating a culture of respect and inclusion requiring the highest professional standards for employees.

Kacey KC demonstrates many of the qualifications needed for this role, and our organizations look forward to working with her on many of the complicated issues facing Oregon's forests. Priorities for Oregon's State Forester must include:

- **Private Forest Accord HCP:** Full implementation and federal approval of the Private Forest Accord Habitat Conservation Plan (PFA HCP) by December 2027 to ensure the durability of the improved riparian protections and increased regulatory certainty of the negotiated agreement.
- **Western Oregon State Forest HCP:** Finalization and federal approval of the Western Oregon State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan (WOSF HCP) by mid-2026 that is consistent with the best science available.
- **Oregon Dept. of Forestry Climate Change and Carbon Plan:** Implementation of the Climate Change and Carbon Plan (Climate Plan), approved by the Board of Forestry in 2021, with specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timebound ("SMART") goals and strategies, including timely monitoring and evaluation.

- **Western Oregon State Forest Management Plan:** Advance ecological forest management principles for state forests through the adoption of a new Western Oregon State Forest Management Plan that is supported by the best science available.
- **Executive Order 25-26:** Ensure ODF plays a strong and active role in meeting objectives of this Executive Order to foster climate resilient working lands.
- **Strategic Planning and Agency Culture:** Development of an agency strategic plan with SMART goals, objectives, strategies, and action plans. Advancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the organizational structure and fostering a culture of respect and inclusion.
- **Transparency and Engagement in Decision-making:** Improve public notice and engagement in decision-making, including engaging communities and surrounding landowners in Implementation Plans and Annual Operations Plans for state forests.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Joe Liebezeit  
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Bird Alliance of Oregon

Josh Laughlin  
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