MEASURE NUMBER: HB 2973   **STATUS:** Original
SUBJECT: Expands forest smoke management programs, creates combined fee, and allows State Forester to enter into agreements for fee payments.
GOVERNMENT UNIT AFFECTED: Department of Forestry
PREPARED BY: Dawn Farr
REVIEWED BY: Susie Jordan
DATE: March 12, 2007

EXPENDITURES: See Comments.

REVENUES: See Comments.

EFFECTIVE DATE: On Passage.

GOVERNOR'S BUDGET: This bill is not anticipated by the Governor's recommended budget.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANDATE: This bill does not affect local governments' service levels or shared revenues sufficient to trigger Section 15, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

COMMENTS: The bill expands forest smoke management program; modifies functions of the forest smoke management advisory committee to include collection, analysis and distribution of emission information; allows the State Forester to establish a combined minimum fee not to exclude $30; and, allows the State Forester to enter into contracts or agreements with a federal land management agency, a person or a public body as defined in ORS 174.109.

Under current statute the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) issues a bill for the burn registration fee ($0.50 per acre) and a separate bill for accomplished burns ($5.00 per acre). For a three acre burn, this results in an initial bill of $1.50 and a second bill of $15.00, to collect total revenues of $16.50. The bill would allow ODF to issue a combined bill, and to set a minimum bill which may not exceed $30.00. Approximately 13% of annual bills would be impacted by a minimal bill. Additional other fund fee revenue, resulting from implementing a minimum bill, is anticipated of approximately $10,000 per biennium. Allowing the State Forester to enter contracts or agreements would impact the payments receipt timing, but not amount of revenues received.

The bill also would require that ODF collect and analyze emissions data. The department already collects this data, and estimates that the additional work to extract and analyze the data can be assumed with existing resources as this work is already done periodically on an ad-hoc basis.