2009 Regular Legislative Session
FISCAL ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION
Prepared by the Oregon Legislative Fiscal Office

MEASURE NUMBER: HB 3249 **STATUS:** Original
SUBJECT: Board of Forestry may designate state forestlands as natural resource conservation areas.
GOVERNMENT UNIT AFFECTED: Department of Forestry and Department of State Lands
PREPARED BY: John Terpening
REVIEWED BY: Susie Jordan
DATE: April 28, 2009 **<REVISED>**

EXPENDITURES:
See Analysis

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2010

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.

ANALYSIS: *This fiscal impact statement has been revised based on new information provided by the Department of Forestry.* The measure allows the State Board of Forestry to designate areas on state forestlands as natural resource conservation areas. The Board and the Department of State Lands may also designate areas on Common School Forest Lands and Elliott State Forest Lands as natural resource conservation areas. The State Forester will direct the management of lands that are designated natural resource conservation areas for purposes of protecting fish and wildlife, drinking water, and old-growth forests, as well as storing carbon, and allowing for low-impact public uses. The management of these areas includes restoring ecological systems, maintaining scenic landscapes and habitats, enhancing sites for low-impact public use, and offering outdoor education.

The measure allows for limited harvesting and other forest resource management if the activities are consistent with the purpose of the natural resource conservation area, the activities do not degrade the suitability of the area for low-impact public use, and a detailed environmental impact statement is conducted of the area with opportunity for public comment. The measure prohibits management activities in natural resource conservation areas that include road construction or use of motorized vehicles, other than motorboats.

The measure is permissive and does not mandate the Board of Forestry or the Department of Forestry (ODF) to take action. If, in adopting this measure the Legislature holds an expectation that the Board of Forestry take action to designate areas of state forestlands as natural resource conservation areas as outlined in the measure, ODF states it would require a permanent full time Natural Resource Specialist position with standard services and supplies costs. The total cost of the position is $119,500 for the 2009-2011 biennium. ODF states that the position would be needed for expertise in areas not currently addressed in the Forest Land Management Classification process such as protecting old growth forests and storing carbon. ODF states that the position would also conduct the environmental impact statements and associated public comment process outlined in the measure. The cost of the position would be paid from the States share of Timber Harvest Revenues (Forest Development Fund) and the Common School Fund. At this time, ODF is unsure whether Forest Development Fund reserves will be sufficient to cover the additional expenditures anticipated for the 2009-2011 biennium.

The Department of State Lands states the measure has no fiscal impact.