

Senator Richard Devlin
900 Court Street NE, S-211
Salem, OR 97301

Representative Dan Rayfield
900 Court Street NE, H-375
Salem, OR 97301

April 13, 2015

RE: Oregon Department of Forestry Federal Forest Health Program

Dear Co-Chairs Devlin and Rayfield and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources:

Please see the attached letters of support for Oregon Department of Forestry Policy Option Package 185, the **Federal Forest Health Program**. The organizations in the attached letters support full funding for the Federal Forest Health Program at \$6.05 million in the 2015-2017 biennium budget.

Below is a complete list of signatories featured in the attached letters of support (in alphabetical order):

American Forest Resource Council
Applegate Partnership & Watershed Council
Association of Oregon Counties
Associated Oregon Industries
Associated Oregon Loggers
Blue Mountains Forest Partners
Boise Cascade
Clackamas Stewardship Partners
Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project
Douglas Timber Operators
Harney County Restoration Collaborative
Hood River Collaborative Stewardship Group
Interfor
Lake County Resources Initiative
McKenzie Watershed Stewardship Group
North Santiam Forest Collaborative
Ochoco Forest Restoration Collaborative
Oregon Business Association
Oregon Business Council
Oregon Small Woodlands Association
Portland Business Alliance
South Umpqua Rural Community Partnership
Southern Oregon Timber Industries Association
Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative
Sustainable Northwest
The Nature Conservancy
Wild Rivers Coast Forest Collaborative



SOTIA

Southern Oregon Timber
Industries Association

March 27, 2015

Re: Budget Package 185, Federal Forest Health Program

Members of the Oregon Legislature:

We write to express our support of Budget Package 185, the Federal Forest Health Program, Oregon Department of Forestry's proposal to invest \$6.05 million in the health of Oregon's federal forest lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

Nearly 18 million acres (60 percent) of Oregon's 30 million acres of forestland are owned and managed by the federal government. Yet, these lands account for only 13 percent of the state's annual timber harvest. A large percentage of our federal forestlands are in need of restoration and are currently in a fire prone condition which threatens our private and state lands. An investment of state revenues is one way to restore the health of our federal forests and increase their productivity, which in turn will provide jobs for Oregonians.

Budget Package 185 will provide the Oregon Department of Forestry with funds to take advantage of the Good Neighbor Authority in the Federal Farm Bill, using both seasonal and permanent ODF staff as "implementation partners" for setting restoration projects in motion. We look forward to working with the Department to develop priorities that include reducing the risk of wildfire moving from federal lands onto state and private lands, thereby reducing the cost of wildfire suppression.

State investment made possible by Budget Package 185 would provide additional capacity to the Federal Forest Health Program, increasing timber volume sold and under contract while increasing wildlife and fish habitat quality. In addition, additional state funds would enhance the ability of local collaborative groups in which our members are active participants to identify and advocate for projects which provide local employment while moving our forests toward resiliency.

While this funding package expands on Governor Kitzhaber's Dry-Side Forest Health Budget Package which we supported during the 2013 legislative session, we view this infusion of State resources into the Forest Service's restoration efforts as a short term catalyst to begin a much

needed long term effort. We caution that the federal agency should not be lead to expect this to be a permanent commitment of State resources. Nevertheless, since it will lead to continued success in helping to provided needed timber volume and jobs from our federal forest lands for the benefit of all Oregonian, we support the current proposal for the 2015 legislative session.

We appreciate your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,



Tom Partin
American Forest Resource Council
www.amforest.org



Jim Geisinger
Associated Oregon Loggers
www.oregonloggers.org



Bob Ragon
Douglas Timber Operators
www.dougtimber.org



Jim James
Oregon Small Woodlands Association
www.oswa.org



Dave Schott
Southern Oregon Timber Industries Association
www.sotia.us

**Boise Wood Products
Inland Region**

1917 Jackson Avenue La Grande, OR 97850
T 541/962-2001 F 541/962-2035
Tomlnsko@BC.com

Thomas A. Insko
Area Manager



Boise Cascade

March 27, 2015

Richard Devlin, Chair
Ways and Means Committee
Natural Resources Subcommittee
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dan Rayfield, Chair
Ways and Means Committee
Natural Resources Subcommittee
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Oregon Department of Forestry Policy Option Package, #185

Dear Sirs:

I write to express Boise Cascade's support of Policy Option Package 185, the Federal Forest Health Program, Oregon Department of Forestry's (ODF) proposal to invest \$6.05 million dollars to increase the pace and scale of federal forest restoration in rural Oregon and work to revitalize the economies of the many resource based communities across the state.

Boise Cascade has more than 1,430 employees working in its ten manufacturing facilities located in eastern and southwestern Oregon. We consistently invest in our operations to ensure they are highly efficient mills that can effectively process small-to-medium diameter log volume that is the natural output from federal forest restoration projects. Our operations are surrounded by federal forests that are in desperate need of restoration yet we continue to struggle to procure needed timber from these local forests.

Nearly 18 million acres (60 percent) of Oregon's 30 million acres of forestland are owned and managed by the federal government. A large percentage of these federal forestlands are in need of restoration and are currently in a fire-prone condition which threatens our private and state lands. The adverse impacts to the environment and economic conditions of the state are significant. While Boise Cascade and many others work to achieve positive federal forest policy reform it is imperative the state continue taking steps to reverse the negative trend we have experienced over the past number of decades. Building on the progress from the \$2.88 million investment made in the last biennium as part of Governor Kitzhaber's Dry-Side Forest Health Budget Package is a logical next step.

An important component to making progress in active federal forest management, collaboration, requires significant resource support. Collaborative groups in eastern Oregon are building momentum due to recent investment by the state and additional support is critical to achieving

successful outcomes. A number of landscape scale projects in eastern Oregon are nearing planning completion and implementation due to the added resources provided by the state during the last two years. Two of these projects, Lower Joseph and Kahler Basin, are expected to offer nearly 75 million board feet of timber while returning resiliency to approximately 80 thousand acres of forestland. These projects, like others, will enhance wildlife habitat for a variety of species and improve fish habitat through stream restoration. Importantly, these are integrated management projects that have a monitoring component built in to ensure that collaborative agreements continue to evolve and adapt to the changing needs of the environment and local communities.

Additional opportunities are offered with the investment of \$6.05 million. The recently passed Farm Bill offers Good Neighbor Authority allowing ODF staff to work as "implementation partners" on forest restoration projects. There is growing opportunity for the state to participate and produce meaningful outcomes and not just contribute to process. Governor Kitzhaber's designation request of 3.1 million acres of federal forestland as "high risk" was approved by Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, and provides additional management efficiency opportunities. Active state investment and involvement can and will produce results.

I am encouraged by the response to the original investment and urge the current legislature to support the increased \$6.05 million package. I believe that this type of investment in our federal forests is needed to meet the economic, social and ecological needs of Oregon's federal forests and the rural communities that live, work, and play in them.

Sincerely,



Thomas A. Insko
Area Manager, Inland
Boise Cascade

CC:

Peter Courtney, Senate President
Diane Rosenbaum, Senate Majority Leader
Ted Ferrioli, Senate Republican Leader
Bill Hansell, Senator, District 29
Tina Kotek, Speaker of the House
Val Hoyle, House Democratic Leader
Mike McLane, House Republican Leader
Greg Barretto, House Representative, District 58
Richard Whitman, Governor's Natural Resource Advisor
Lauri Aunan, Natural Resource Policy Advisor
Doug Decker, State Forester, ODF
Chad Davis, Senior Policy Analyst, ODF
Brett Brownscombe, Interim Deputy Director ODFW



INTERFOR

March 27, 2015

Re: Budget Package 185, Federal Forest Health Program

Members of the Oregon Legislature:

Interfor supports Budget Package 185, the Federal Forest Health Program, and Oregon Department of Forestry's proposal to invest \$6.05 million in the health of Oregon's federal forest lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

We own two mills in Oregon: one in Molalla and one in Gilchrist. Together these facilities directly employ about 300 employees providing family wage jobs and full benefits including health care. We do not own any timber lands and thus are dependent on timber from both private and public lands.

Nearly 18 million acres (60 percent) of Oregon's 30 million acres of forestland are owned and managed by the federal government. Yet, these lands account for only 13 percent of the state's annual timber harvest. A large percentage of our federal forestlands are in need of restoration and are currently in a fire prone condition which threatens our private and state lands. An investment of state revenues is one way to restore the health of our federal forests and increase their productivity, which in turn will provide jobs for Oregonians.

Budget Package 185 will provide the Oregon Department of Forestry with funds to take advantage of the Good Neighbor Authority in the Federal Farm Bill, using both seasonal and permanent ODF staff as "implementation partners" for setting restoration projects in motion. It is our hope that, in an effort to reduce the risk of wildfire moving from the overly dense federal lands and onto state and private lands and to reduce state fire-fighting costs, money spent by the state will be focused on fire risk assessment and treatments that reduce this high risk and the associated costs.

State investment made possible by Budget Package 185 would provide additional capacity to the Federal Forest Health Program, increasing timber volume while increasing wildlife and fish habitat quality. Furthermore, additional state funds would enhance the ability of local collaborative groups in which Interfor actively participates to identify and advocate for projects which provide local employment while moving our forests toward resiliency.

We appreciate your consideration of our views.

Chuck Burley
Public Affairs Manager
US Operations
chuck.burley@interfor.com
(541) 876-7880

Interfor U.S. Inc.

Gilchrist Division
P.O. Box 638
#1 Sawmill Road
Gilchrist, OR 97737

tel: (541) 433-2222
fax: (541) 433-9581

Interfor.com

DATE: March 23, 2015

TO: Senator Richard Devlin, Co-Chair, Joint Ways & Means Committee
Representative Peter Buckley, Co-Chair, Joint Ways & Means Committee

FROM: Judge Gary Thompson, Sherman County, AOC President 

SUBJECT: Oregon Department of Forestry's Federal Forest Health Program

The Association of Oregon Counties strongly supports full funding of the Oregon Department of Forestry Federal Forest Health Program at \$6.05 million in the 2015-2017 biennial budget. This investment is critical to increasing the pace and scale of restoration of Oregon's federal forests and ensuring the well-being of rural communities and businesses that depend on them.

Much of these lands are no longer in historic conditions, resulting in a loss of wildlife habitat and severe threats to important ecological services and valuable forest resources by catastrophic events (e.g., wildfire). Changes in forest management over the past few decades has also resulted in the loss of much of the state's forest products infrastructure and associated jobs. The Federal Forest Health Program works to reverse these trends by supporting forest collaboration and partnerships with federal forestry agencies.

Forest collaborative groups bring environmentalists, timber industry representatives, local government, and community members together to find agreement on forest management. Collaboration has allowed the U.S. Forest Service to plan projects that meet multiple ecological and economic objectives, increased the number and size of projects the agency has been able to implement, and has significantly reduced litigation. The Federal Forest Health Program, including Collaborative Support Grants, provide financial resources and expertise to collaboratives that would otherwise be difficult, if not impossible, to fund.

In the 2013-2015 budget, the Legislature invested \$2.885 million in this unique new program. That investment paid off and was leveraged more than 3:1 by the U.S. Forest Service in priority treatment areas in the "dry forests" of eastern and southwest Oregon. In the next biennium we have the opportunity to build upon these successes by expanding the program statewide. Expanding the program into western Oregon will require the development of goals and objectives that align with the different ecosystem types and needs of western Oregon collaboratives and communities. The increased investment and expansion will support additional partnerships between the state and federal landowners to increase the pace and scale of forest treatments where needed.

Representative Peter Buckley
900 Court Street NE, H-272
Salem, OR 97301

Senator Richard Devlin
900 Court Street NE, S-211
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Full Funding for the Oregon Department of Forestry Federal Forest Health Program

Dear Representative Buckley and Senator Devlin:

The forest collaboratives included on this letter are writing to express our strong support for full funding of the Oregon Department of Forestry Federal Forest Health Program at \$6.05 million in the 2015-2017 biennium budget. This investment, as outlined in the Governor's Recommended Budget, is critical to increasing the pace and scale of restoration of Oregon's federal forests and ensuring the well-being of rural communities and businesses that depend on them.

More than 60% of Oregon's forests are federal lands that provide diverse economic opportunities, clean air and drinking water, critical wildlife habitat, and recreational experiences. However, the health of much of these lands is departed from historic conditions, resulting in a loss of wildlife habitat, threats to important ecological services and valuable forest resources. Changes in forest management over the past few decades has also resulted in the loss of much of the state's forest products infrastructure and associated jobs. The Federal Forest Health Program works to reverse these trends by supporting forest collaboration and partnerships with the Forest Service. The Program seeks to increase wildlife and fish habitat, reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire, support jobs in watershed restoration, and produce timber supply for mills and forest products companies.

Forest collaborative groups bring environmentalists, timber industry representatives, local government, and community members together to find agreement on forest management. Collaboration has allowed the U.S. Forest Service to plan projects that meet multiple ecological and economic objectives, increased the number and size of projects the agency has been able to implement, and has significantly reduced litigation. Elements of the Federal Forest Health Program, including Collaborative Support Grants, provide financial resources and expertise to collaboratives that would otherwise be difficult, if not impossible, to fund. These resources are essential to maintaining the operations of forest collaboratives and expanding the social agreement we have developed for forest restoration in recent years.

In the 2013-2015 budget, the legislature invested \$2.885 million in this unique new program. That investment paid off and was leveraged more than 3:1 by the U.S. Forest Service in priority treatment areas in the "dry forests" of eastern and southwest Oregon. In the next biennium we have the opportunity to build upon these successes by expanding the Federal Forest Health Program statewide. Expanding the program into western Oregon will require the development of goals and objectives that align with the different ecosystem types and needs of western Oregon collaboratives and communities. The increased investment and expansion will support additional partnerships between the state and federal landowners to increase the pace and scale of forest treatments where needed, and enable more forest collaborative groups to assist in restoring forests and creating jobs across Oregon.

We appreciate the Department of Forestry's implementation of the Federal Forest Health Program over the past biennium and strongly encourage you to continue to support this groundbreaking effort. Full funding for the Federal Forest Health Program at \$6.05 million in the 2015-2017 biennium is integral to

improving the health of our state's federal forest lands, ensuring the well-being of rural communities, and providing many additional benefits to the residents of Oregon.

If you would like further information please don't hesitate to contact Dylan Kruse with Sustainable Northwest at 503-221-6911 x115 or Amanda Rich with The Nature Conservancy at 503-871-5733. They can put you in touch with your local forest collaborative or assist in finding answers to any questions you may have.

Thank you for supporting this important program.

Respectfully,

Applegate Partnership & Watershed Council, *Applegate River Watershed, Rogue-River Siskiyou National Forest & Medford BLM District*

Blue Mountains Forest Partners, *John Day, Malheur National Forest*

Clackamas Stewardship Partners, *Clackamas River Basin, Mt Hood National Forest*

Deschutes Collaborative Forest Project, *Bend, Deschutes National Forest*

Harney County Restoration Collaborative, *Burns, Malheur National Forest*

Hood River Collaborative Stewardship Group, *Hood River, Mt Hood National Forest*

Lake County Resources Initiative, *Lakeview, Fremont-Winema National Forest*

McKenzie Watershed Stewardship Group, *Eugene, Willamette National Forest*

North Santiam Forest Collaborative, *Gates, Willamette National Forest*

Ochoco Forest Restoration Collaborative, *Prineville, Ochoco National Forest*

South Umpqua Rural Community Partnership, *Umpqua River Valley, Umpqua National Forest & Roseburg BLM District*

Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative, *Oakridge, Willamette National Forest*

Wild Rivers Coast Forest Collaborative, *Gold Beach, Rogue-River Siskiyou National Forest*



April 8, 2015

Representative Peter Buckley
900 Court Street NE, H-272
Salem, OR 97301

Senator Richard Devlin
900 Court Street NE, S-211
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Full Funding for the Oregon Department of Forestry Federal Forest Health Program

Dear Representative Buckley and Senator Devlin:

Sustainable Northwest would like to express our strong support for full funding of the Oregon Department of Forestry Federal Forest Health Program at \$6.05 million in the 2015-2017 biennium budget. This investment, as outlined in the Governor's Recommended Budget, is critical to increasing the pace and scale of restoration of Oregon's federal forests and ensuring the well-being of rural communities and businesses that depend on them.

More than 60% of Oregon's forests are federal lands that provide diverse economic opportunities, clean air and drinking water, critical wildlife habitat, and recreational experiences. However, the health of much of these lands is departed from historic conditions, resulting in threats to important ecological services and valuable forest resources. Changes in forest management over the past few decades has also resulted in the loss of much of the state's forest products infrastructure and associated jobs. The Federal Forest Health Program works to reverse these trends by supporting forest collaboration and partnerships with the U.S. Forest Service. The program seeks to reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire, increase wildlife and fish habitat, support jobs in watershed restoration, and produce timber supply for mills and forest products companies.

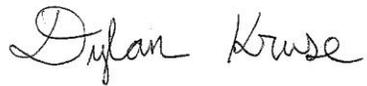
In addition to the aforementioned benefits, we are supportive of the program due to its emphasis on fostering collaboration. Forest collaboratives bring environmentalists, timber industry representatives, local government, and community members together to find agreement on forest management. Collaboration has allowed the U.S. Forest Service to plan projects that meet multiple ecological and economic objectives, increased the number and size of projects being implemented, and has reduced litigation. Elements of the Federal Forest Health Program, including Collaborative Support Grants, provide financial resources and expertise to collaboratives that would otherwise be difficult, if not impossible, to fund.

In the 2013-2015 budget, the legislature invested \$2.885 million in this unique new program. That investment paid off and was leveraged more than 3:1 by the U.S. Forest Service in priority treatment areas in the "dry forests" of eastern and southwest Oregon. In the next biennium we have the opportunity to build upon these successes by expanding the Federal Forest Health Program statewide. The increased investment and expansion will support additional partnerships between the state and federal landowners to increase the pace and scale of forest treatments where needed, and enable more forest collaborative groups to assist in restoring forests and creating jobs across Oregon.

Full funding for the Federal Forest Health Program at \$6.05 million in the 2015-2017 biennium is integral to improving the health of our state's federal forest lands, ensuring the well-being of rural communities, and providing many additional benefits to the residents of Oregon.

Thank you for supporting this important program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dylan Kruse". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Dylan Kruse
Policy Director
Sustainable Northwest
(503) 221-6911 x115
dkruse@sustainablenorthwest.org



April 9, 2015

RE: Full Funding for the Oregon Department of Forestry Federal Forest Health Program

Dear Members of the Oregon Legislature,

The business organizations included on this letter are writing to express our strong support for full funding of the Oregon Department of Forestry Federal Forest Health Program at \$6.05 million in the 2015-2017 biennium budget (HB 5019). This investment, as outlined in the Governor's Recommended Budget, is critical to increasing the pace and scale of restoration of Oregon's federal forests and ensuring the well-being of rural communities and businesses that depend on them.

More than 60% of Oregon's forests are federal lands that provide diverse economic opportunities, clean air and drinking water, critical wildlife habitat and recreational experiences. However, the health of much of these lands is departed from historic conditions, resulting in a loss of wildlife habitat, threats to important ecological services and valuable forest resources. Changes in forest management over the past few decades has also resulted in the loss of much of the state's forest products infrastructure and associated jobs. The Federal Forest Health Program works to reverse these trends by supporting forest collaboration and partnerships with the Forest Service. The Program seeks to increase wildlife and fish habitat, reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire, support jobs in watershed restoration, and produce timber supply for mills and forest products companies.

Forest collaborative groups bring environmentalists, timber industry representatives, local government, and community members together to find agreement on forest management. Collaboration has allowed the U.S. Forest Service to plan projects that meet multiple ecological and economic objectives, increased the number and size of projects the agency has been able to implement, and has significantly reduced litigation. Elements of the Federal Forest Health Program, including Collaborative Support Grants, provide financial resources and expertise to collaboratives that would otherwise be difficult, if not impossible, to fund. These resources are essential to maintaining the operations of forest collaboratives and expanding the social agreement we have developed for forest restoration in recent years.

In the 2013-2015 budget, the legislature invested \$2.885 million in this unique new program. That investment paid off and was leveraged more than 3:1 by the U.S. Forest Service in priority treatment areas in the "dry forests" of eastern and southwest Oregon. In the next

biennium we have the opportunity to build upon these successes by expanding the Federal Forest Health Program statewide. Expanding the program into western Oregon will require the development of goals and objectives that align with the different ecosystem types and needs of western Oregon collaboratives and communities. The increased investment and expansion will support additional partnerships between the state and federal landowners to increase the pace and scale of forest treatments where needed, and enable more forest collaborative groups to assist in restoring forests and creating jobs across Oregon.

We appreciate the Department of Forestry's implementation of the Federal Forest Health Program over the past biennium and strongly encourage you to continue to support this groundbreaking effort. Full funding for the Federal Forest Health Program at \$6.05 million in the 2015-2017 biennium is integral to improving the health of our state's federal forest lands, ensuring the well-being of rural communities, and providing many additional benefits to the residents of Oregon.

If you would like further information please don't hesitate to contact us.

Thank you for supporting this important program.

Respectfully,

Associated Oregon Industries
The Oregon Business Association
The Oregon Business Council
The Portland Business Alliance

Date: April 13, 2015

To: Senator Richard Devlin, Co-Chair, Joint Ways & Means Committee
Representative Peter Buckley, Co-Chair, Joint Ways & Means Committee
Members of the Joint Ways & Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources

From: Amanda Rich, Director of State Government Relations, Oregon Chapter of The Nature Conservancy

Re: Full funding for Oregon Department of Forestry, Federal Forest Health Program (Policy Option Package 185)

The Nature Conservancy strongly supports full funding of the Oregon Department of Forestry Federal Forest Health Program at \$6.05 million in the 2015-2017 biennial budget. This investment is critical to increasing the quality, pace and scale of restoration of Oregon's federal forests and ensuring the well-being of rural communities, businesses and ecosystems that depend on healthy forests.

A significant portion of Oregon's federal forests are departed from historic conditions. The unhealthy state of these lands presents a significant risk of catastrophic wildfire and the resulting loss of wildlife habitat, important ecological services and valuable forest resources. Forest management practices over the last few decades have, in part, led to these forest conditions and the loss of much of the state's forest products infrastructure and associated jobs. The Federal Forest Health Program works to reverse the trends of declining forest health and the loss of critical infrastructure and skilled forest workforce by supporting forest collaboration and creating partnerships with federal forestry agencies to accelerate necessary forest management.

In the 2013-2015 budget, the Legislature invested \$2.885 million in this new program – the first of its kind in the nation. That initial investment leveraged USFS funding by more than 3:1 in priority treatment areas in the “dry fire prone” forests of eastern and southwest Oregon. The 2015-2017 proposal builds on the successes and lessons learned in this biennium and expands the program statewide. The increased funding will continue the critical work underway in eastern and southwestern Oregon, enable additional partnerships between the state and federal landowners, support the development of goals and objectives that align with the needs of western Oregon's forests and communities and allow more forest collaborative groups to work toward agreements that restore forests and create jobs across Oregon.

We appreciate the Department of Forestry's implementation of the Federal Forest Health Program over the past biennium and strongly encourage you to continue supporting this groundbreaking effort by fully funding the \$6.05 million request in policy option package 185.

Amanda Rich
Director of State Government Relations
The Nature Conservancy in Oregon
arich@tnc.org

The Nature Conservancy is the world's leading conservation organization, working in all 50 United States and 35 countries across the globe. In Oregon, with the support of 32,000 members, we own 44 preserves and have helped protect more than 511,000 acres of critical habitat since our chapter began in 1961. We are guided by innovative science and thrive because of effective partnerships. **We bring people together to find solutions that protect nature and promote the social and economic vitality of the communities in which we work.** To learn more, please visit us at [Nature.org/Oregon](https://www.nature.org/oregon).