

Chairs, co-chairs, members of the Joint Committee. I'm Fergus Mclean.

I offer my appreciation and gratitude for your service leading us through the monumental process of collective self-realization and transformation you are engaged in, and welcome you to the great forest that makes up Lane County.

Oregon's forests were a source of CO₂ right up to the creation of the NW Forest Plan in 1992, which enabled them to grow into the globally significant carbon sink they are today. Recognition of the magnitude of that shift from source to sink illustrates the importance of our forest management policies, and raises the difficult question of how to best grapple with our state's massive, but still only partly understood system of forest carbon flux- while logging remains our state's largest single source of CO₂ emissions.

We have a great opportunity for studying and understanding- and so learning how to best manage- our forests' carbon in the conversion now underway of the Elliott State Forest into what can become the Elliott State Forest Carbon and Wildfire Research Institute.

The Legislature can draw on Oregonians' deep attachment to the Elliott to support you in exercising your authority under Article VIII of Oregon's Constitution to allow the Elliott to retain the revenue it is able to generate by clarifying- by law- the Powers and Duties of the State Land Board so as to decouple the Elliott from the Common School Fund, and in also referring to the voters a measure dedicating a \$2/thousand board feet increase in the Forest Harvest Tax to the ongoing operations of Oregon's new forest carbon research institution.