

SB 1514 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Wildfire Reduction and Recovery

Action Date: 02/10/20

Action: Do pass with amendments. Refer to Ways and Means by prior reference. (Printed A-Eng).

Vote: 3-2-0-0

Yeas: 3 - Frederick, Golden, Prozanski

Nays: 2 - Baertschiger Jr, Thatcher

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Laura Kentnesse, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 2/3, 2/10

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) to establish, execute, and complete not more than 15 projects to reduce hazardous fuels and restore landscape resilience on public or private forestlands and rangelands by June 30, 2021. Requires ODF to: consult and collaborate with specified stakeholders; identify and prioritize strategic, ready-to-treat landscapes in collaboration with the Oregon State University Extension Service and other entities; design the projects to evaluate fuel treatment methods, leverage public-private partnerships and state and federal funding, and to involve existing youth workforce development programs, businesses, and contracting entities; and carefully monitor projects to produce useful information for recommendations. Prohibits commercial thinning on specified lands including inventoried roadless areas, federally protected areas, and certain riparian reserves, late successional reserves, and designated critical habitat for listed threatened or endangered species. Requires ODF to give public notice and provide opportunity for public input on project selection. Clarifies that legal rights, privileges, duties, or functions that pertain to the private land management will not be affected by this Act. Requires ODF to work with specified partners to develop consistent performance measurements and condition-based metrics for monitoring and communicating project efficacy. Requires ODF to identify and remove disincentives to prescribed fire usage, review and evaluate existing prescribed fire standards of care, and propose a framework for a statewide voluntary Prescribed Burn Manager Certificate standard and program. Requires ODF to provide to the Governor and interim legislative committees an interim report by December 1, 2020, and a final report by September 15, 2021. Specifies report requirements. Appropriates \$25 million General Fund moneys for the biennium ending June 30, 2021. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Scale and prioritization of fuel reduction and forest restoration needs in Oregon
- Short- and long-term strategic timelines to implement treatments
- Opportunities and challenges to treatment on state, federal, and private lands
- Required reports are designed to assist in the development of a 20-year treatment strategy
- Vision for collaborative partnership between the Oregon Department of Forestry and Oregon State University Extension Service
- Governor's Council on Wildfire Response

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Modifies the expected quantity of ODF projects from 2 to 5 projects, to up to 15 projects. Clarifies projects may occur on public or private lands. Requires ODF to collaborate with the Oregon State University Extension Service to identify and prioritize strategic, ready-to-treat landscapes. Requires that ODF prioritize projects that protect public values such as human life, property, and critical infrastructure. Prohibits commercial thinning on specified lands including inventoried roadless areas, federally protected areas, and certain riparian reserves, late

SB 1514 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

successional reserves, and designated critical habitat for listed threatened or endangered species. Requires ODF to give public notice and provide opportunity for public input on project selection. Clarifies that legal rights, privileges, duties, or functions that pertain to the private land management will not be affected by this Act. Requires ODF to provide an interim report to the Governor and interim legislative committees by December 1, 2020 and specifies report requirements. Changes final report due date from January 1 to September 15, 2021 and specifies report requirements. Requires ODF to work with specified partners to develop consistent performance measurements and condition-based metrics for monitoring and communicating project efficacy. Requires ODF to identify and remove disincentives to prescribed fire usage, review and evaluate existing prescribed fire standards of care, and propose a framework for a statewide voluntary Prescribed Burn Manager Certificate standard and program. Changes appropriation from \$1 to \$25 million General Fund moneys.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon Governor Kate Brown created the Governor's Council on Wildfire Response by executive order in January of 2019. The Council was tasked with reviewing Oregon's current model for wildfire prevention, preparedness, and response, and analyzing whether the current model is sustainable given increasing wildfire risks. The Council met regularly for nine months and formed three active subcommittees that focused on mitigation, fire suppression, and adaptation and recovery. The product of the Council's extensive work was a final report that concluded that some or all of the current models are not sufficient to ensure Oregon is prepared for increasingly severe wildfire seasons. The report proposed 37 recommendations; Senate Bill 1514-A reflects content from recommendations 14-18.

Senate Bill 1514-A would require the Oregon Department of Forestry to establish, execute, and complete up to 15 projects to reduce hazardous fuels and restore landscape resilience on public or private forestlands and rangelands by June 30, 2021.