

**Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) – HB 2357**  
**Please vote No**

Chair Witt and esteemed Members,

The Legislature created OFRI in 1991 to educate forest landowners and the public about forest practices. OFRI is funded exclusively through the Forest Products Harvest Tax, a volumetric tax on harvested timber paid only by timber growers and receives no General Fund dollars. OFRI is the state's commodity commission for timber. There are 22 other commodity commissions for ag crops such as wheat, beef, blueberries, hazelnuts and others. Yet unlike the other commodity commissions, OFRI cannot lobby or directly levy assessments to industry, and requires a legislative appointee.

My wife and I became Woodland Managers of our 360-acre Hoskins property in 2000, made up of 200 acres of fair timber ground and 160 acres of wet prairies, creeks, and riparian buffers (none of which can be managed for long term timber production). This is a typical scenario for small woodlands owners as we can only afford marginal ground. Yet we were determined to maximize our ground to its highest & best values: timber ground for habitat as well as logs, and the remaining ground for maximizing ecosystem function for all native fauna & flora.

How do landowners like ourselves, without any knowledge of such things proceed?  
Where do we find guidance and information?  
Why is this important to all Oregonians?

The Partnership for Forestry Education is an innovative endeavor of government, nonprofit and private organizations dedicated to providing educational resources to forest landowners, managers and operators\*. OFRI is the glue of this organization providing funding and organizational expertise to carry out the mission of the partnership.

OFRI also produces publications that can be downloaded or snail-mailed for free. All are paid for by the Forest Products Harvest Tax, not taxpayers. The most used of these on the J<sub>2</sub>E Tree Farm are:

*Oregon Forest Facts 2021-2022*: Did you know that Oregon has 30 million acres of forestland, which has been fairly consistent for a century, and probably since the 1600's?

*Resources for Family Forests*: An in-depth list of all Family Forest Landowner Associations, State & Federal Natural Resource Agencies, OSU Extension, & Professional Forestry Services locations and contacts.

*Oregon's Forest Protection Laws*: An illustrated manual of best management practices for all things associated with planning and performing a timber harvest, reforestation, fire prevention, herbicide use, roads & stream crossings.

*Wildlife in Managed Forests Series:* Multiple guides to maximize forests as habitat. Our favorites are *Oregon Forests as Habitat*, *Early Seral-Associated Songbirds* and *The American Beaver*.

*Carbon in Oregon's Managed Forests:* A guide to carbon accounting in our forests. Did you know that in 2016 Oregon's forests sequester 90.5% of all Oregon CO2 emissions? This ability to sequester carbon, and sequester it indefinitely in forest products, is a valuable asset as Oregon moves forward to battle climate change.

OFRI offers a variety of training opportunities such as workshops, tours and webinars. My wife and I have completed the *Master Woodland Manager* program, the *Ties to the Land* program (succession planning), *Tree School*, and attended multiple OFRI sponsored tours.

Small Woodland owners manage 3.7 million acres or 12% of the state's forests, almost 1 out of every 8 acres. That's a huge responsibility. OFRI is critical to sustainable forestry in our state and to the success of all Oregon Family Forest Owners.

As you all know, Oregon forests sequester carbon, enrich the soil, provide outstanding clean & cool water, improve air quality, regulate temperature extremes, and provide pleasing aesthetics as well as habitat for all fauna & flora. Please help OFRI help us.

Oregon is better with OFRI. **Vote No on HB 2357.**

Thanks for your time.

Dave & Sarah Ehlers  
J2E Tree Farm, LLC  
Hoskins, OR

**Addendum:** After sitting through yesterday evening's *Oregon Wild Cohort's* presentation, I strongly support the committee inviting OFRI officials to convey their version of things. I would also encourage the committee to download the carbon publication above (<https://oregonforests.org/Carbon>) and read the bottom of page 18 under 1.4, as well as any of the chapter bibliographies, for instance page 22.

The Secretary of State's office is conducting a performance audit of OFRI, with a report expected no later than summer of 2021. No changes should be made to OFRI until the audit is complete.

When I read the original reporting an old saying came to mind: "Don't believe anything you hear, and only half of what you see."

\* Members include the American Forest Foundation, Associated Oregon Loggers, Committee for Family Forestlands, Ecotrust, National Woodland Owners Association, Northwest Natural Resource Group, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon Forest Resources Institute, Oregon Small Woodlands Association, Oregon Society of American Foresters, Oregon State University Forestry and Natural Resources, Oregon Tree Farm System, Pinchot Institute, USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station, USDA Forest Service, Region 6, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Western Forestry and Conservation Association.