

Oregon's forest practices, promoted and upheld by OFRI, have held this state's citizens hostage for far too long. Logging in Oregon is NOT sustainable. If real consideration for sustainability had been a priority in the past, we would have mills booming with production throughout the area, and we would have more than just the tiny, scattered fragments of old growth forests left standing. I know this is true from my own research and experience. I am a small woodlot owner (37 acres). For 50 years I have harvested trees for lumber and firewood for my own use and for sale, yet today my property is a lush and thriving forest. By keeping the health and habitat values of the forest as a top priority. I have seen that one can utilize the forest as a resource without destroying the ecosystem services it provides. It only requires environmental foresight and the will to proceed thoughtfully and selectively and to avoid the lure of making the quickest profits possible by making large clearcuts.

The OFRI was established with taxpayer's money to educate the public about forestry. Because the Board of Forestry is made up of mostly of people from the timber industry, it became instead a propaganda service for unsustainable forestry. The OFRI sponsors TV commercials telling that industrial forestry in Oregon is good for the public and good for the environment. They do not mention the old growth, its vital role in our planet's biosphere, or that it has been logged until there is less than 10% of it left. They call tree plantations forests, and make it sound like it's just fine to convert the entire Oregon temperate forest to an industrial tree crop cut on a 40 year cycle. In their updated manual for the Oregon Forest Protections Act, OFRI guidance on how to comply with laws and regulations when practicing forestry is given, but only to the barest minimum. In the glossy 200 page detailed manual, there is exactly one half page devoted to doing more than the least that is required to meet the law. This is a plan for a Stewardship Agreement, which the authors mention is an exception to the expedient and profit-based forestry the manual promotes, in that it "takes a long-term and property-wide perspective." (p. 139) Here is a covert admission that OFRI promotes forestry based on short-term profitability at the expense of the life-supporting services that healthy forests provide.

In the entire updated OFRI manual for forest practices, I do not find one mention of the Climate Crisis. While the rest of the world is recognizing the role that forests play in storing carbon from the atmosphere and undertaking tree-planting campaigns, the local forest industry, with approval from OFRI, continues to look for loop-holes so they can exceed the already too big 120 acre clear-cut allowed.

For far too long, the OFRI has supported forestry practices in Oregon that ignore the science and any recent research that has given us new understanding of just how important forests are to the biodiversity and sustainability of life on Earth. It is time to disband this organization that has existed not to educate the public, but to justify unsustainable forestry.