

CASCADE



Timber Consulting, Inc.

MILTON I. MORAN, JR
President

RICK JONES, PLS, Director
Surveying & Easements

GAYLE GIDDINGS, Director
Office Management

BRIAN MURRAY, CF, Director
Sale Planning & Inventory

KEVIN VAN CLEAVE, Director
Engineering & Log Sales

MARK GOURLEY, CF, Director
Silviculture

Telephone 367-2111
Area 541

Fax# 367-2117

3210 HWY. 20

P.O. BOX 446

SWEET HOME, OREGON 97386

February 26, 2021

No on HB 2379

Chairman Witt, Vice Chairs Breese-Iverson and Hudson and members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

My name is Milton I. Moran Jr., President of Cascade Timber Consulting, Inc., (CTC), located in Sweet Home, Oregon. We manage the Hill Timber Limited Partnership lands, all in Linn County.

We have a 145,000 acre Tree Farm.

I Live in the Sweet Home area in Linn County.

I have worked on this tree farm for the Hill family for nearly 48 years, the same owner since 1916 and held in a timber trust since 1917.

I come to you today in **Opposition of House Bill 2379**

This not the time for new Taxes, especially a Severance Tax!

We are very lucky, compared to some of our neighboring landowners, to not have suffered losses due to the large wildfires. We spent several weeks fighting these monster wildfires, and other new fires, protecting our lands, our neighbors, and our communities.

As our industry, small woodland owners, our communities, and neighbors rebuild, salvage, and reforest these lands, the last thing we need is another new tax.

Forest landowners should not be incentivized to sell their tree farm for development. Rural Acreage to build new homes is short in supply and high in demand. Forest land needs to be maintained to absorb and store carbon, create wildlife habitat, and provide clean air and clean water for all Oregonians.

Oregon's forest industry provides over 60,000 family wage jobs, products we all use every day, recreational opportunities, and the economics to keep many rural communities viable.

HB 2379 creates a 5% **Severance Tax** based on value when harvested and eliminates funding for the Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI).

OFRI is funded through a Forest Products Harvest Tax, a volume-based tax paid only by timber growers and receives No General Fund Dollars.

OFRI had sponsored classroom and field forest programs to 170,000 K-12 students in 2018/2019 and 78 trainings attended by over 6,000 landowners in 2019-2020. OFRI has produced Oregon's Forest Protection Laws Manual, an illustrated reference for landowners, managers and forest operators to learn and follow the Oregon Forest Practices Act.

If current OFRI funding is eliminated who will educate forest landowners, the public and K-12 students about good forest practices?

We owe our students practical educational opportunities about forestry and forest products. Hopefully our children will be given the chance to go on field trips and participate in OFRI sponsored classroom programs very soon.

Please consider the negative impacts of a tax that will be a burden for landowners that are recovering from last years mega fires, and all this during a pandemic, that has been hard on all of us. Oregon's forestland owners already pay significant Property Taxes.


Many burned out landowners did not have timber old enough to generate income from salvage. They have carried those costs of planting and protecting those forests for 10, 20, 30 years. Some may generate income but need to spend considerable funds to get their lands ready and replanted.

The elimination of the current funding for OFRI is the wrong thing to do. OFRI is the states commodity commission for timber, created in 1991 by the Oregon Legislature. There are 22 other commodity commissions in Oregon for agriculture. These commissions are essential conduits between Ag and the public. OFRI is an essential conduit between our industry, the public and our classrooms, providing information and education. OFRI's Oregon Forest Facts booklet is a great source of data about our industry.

Your careful considerations are greatly appreciated.

Thank You for all your service to Oregon

Sincerely,



Milton I. Moran Jr., President
Cascade Timber Consulting, Inc.
Sweet Home, Oregon