



Oregon State
University

Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President
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Oregon State University
Corvallis, Oregon 97331
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1 February 2022

Senator Jeff Golden
Chair, Senate Natural Resources Committee

RE: Support of SB 1546, establishment of the Elliott State Research Forest

Dear Senator Golden,

Over the last two years, Oregon State University (OSU) has been working collaboratively with stakeholders and the Department of State Lands to identify a structure for a prospective Elliott State Research Forest that would provide for stable management to advance the long-term research vision for the forest, ensure its financial viability and sustainability, and achieve the delivery of multiple forest values for Oregon and Oregonians. OSU believes the governance structure established in SB 1546 can accomplish these objectives.

The mission of the Elliott State Research Forest as established by SB 1546 is *to create an enduring, publicly owned, world-class research forest that:*

(a) Advances and supports forest health, climate resilience, carbon sequestration, biodiversity, recovery of imperiled species, water quality and quantity, recreational opportunities, and local economies.

(b) Is managed to promote collaboration, partnerships, inclusive public processes, and equity.

Through scientific inquiry, an Elliott State Research Forest would allow OSU and its collaborators worldwide to undertake research that helps address the growing climate crisis that threatens the health and well-being of all Oregonians. Research, education, outreach, and engagement programs on the Elliott State Research Forest will highlight how conservation goals may be achieved while providing traditional and innovative forest products to a growing population.

The proposed legislation will keep the land publicly owned and provide for public access, while still enabling OSU to conduct much needed research on the management of forests for multiple benefits. Further, the proposed independent Board of Directors of the Elliott State Research Forest Authority provides the balance and focus needed to achieve these goals and ensure success.

There is, of course, work to do prior to full implementation of SB 1546. OSU is committed to completing its part in the development of the Forest Management Plan, the Habitat Conservation Plan, and the financial plan. OSU underscores the importance of fully decoupling the Elliott State Forest from the Common School to meet the State of Oregon's commitment as well as securing the start-up funding necessary to accomplish the research mission of the new entity. OSU looks forward to our continued work with stakeholders and the public and taking a full proposal to the

OSU Board of Trustees for approval. These steps are important to ensuring accountability and making the Elliott State Research Forest a reality.

Senate Bill 1546 is an important step forward in transforming the Elliott into a research forest. Thank you for considering this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward Feser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and "F".

Edward Feser
Provost and Executive Vice President