

Feb. 03, 2022



Oregon State Legislature  
Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire  
**Re.: Testimony on SB 1546—creating an Elliott State Research Forest**

By electronic submission to: <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2022R1/Testimony/SNRWR>

Dear Chair Golden and Members of the Committee:

My name is Bob Van Dyk, and I serve as the Oregon Policy Director for the Wild Salmon Center.

For the past three-plus years, I've also served as a member of the state-convened Elliott Advisory Committee, where I've worked to represent fish and aquatic conservation interests in the latest effort to resolve the deeply rooted, multi-decade controversy that's come to be known in short as "the Elliott".

A solution is finally within reach, and the Wild Salmon Center strongly supports the -1 amended version of SB 1546 before you now.

The Elliott has come to symbolize many things. **As a wild-fish conservation organization**, we are confident in the salmon and aquatic provisions in OSU's Elliott proposal to the State Land Board and in the state's draft Habitat Conservation Plan.

**As an organization dedicated to science**, an Elliott State Research Forest will provide research relevant to forestry, fish habitat, and the pressures on both, including climate change. This is a tremendous opportunity to re-shape how the public understands forest management, the values forests provide, and what our state's College of Forestry is all about.

But **as an Advisory Committee member** asked to represent broader interests, the Elliott State Research Forest represents much more than wild fish. I have been doing conservation work long enough to know why and how we disagree, and like the Private Forest Accord, this is a rare moment in time to move beyond conflict to a collaborative solution.

The list of parties included in the Elliott process and supportive of the next steps is remarkable. Education beneficiaries, timber interests, tribes, recreationists, county officials, and conservationists alongside the state and OSU.

In closing I want to recognize in particular some individuals, in addition to Governor Brown, who have gotten us to this place. Dr. Gordon Reeves is a prominent aquatic specialist that OSU brought on their team, and he designed a cutting edge strategy to protect fish and explore how management affects their habitat. Dean Tom DeLuca provided steady leadership and direction. Director Walker and Geoff Huntington anchored the DSL team. And Treasurer Read and Dmitri Palmateer of the Treasurer's office kept us all on the bus more than once with their vision and patience.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I would be happy to try to answer any questions.

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