

Submitter: Greg Peterson

On Behalf  
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and  
Water

Measure: HB3019

I am most concerned about HB3019 plan to distribute the hard earned funds that forest landowners, like myself, have earned to other entities, not forestry related. Non-forestry groups proposed to be inserted into OFRI's board do not contribute funds to OFRI and thus have no "skin in the game", so they don't appreciate the many issue that small forest owners contend with. Why should woodland owners like myself foot the bill and then have other groups take and spend our money Willy Nilly and dictate their priorities. All other natural resources groups are able to prioritize and manage their self-collected fees, which is the essence of self-governance, why shouldn't forestry continue to do so as well?

OFRI is funded exclusively through the Forest Products Harvest Tax paid by forest landowners and receives no General Fund dollars. OFRI has played a vital role in fostering public awareness through scientific research, public workshops on forest management, K-12 forest education programs, promotion of best practices on Oregon's forests. OFRI produces relevant and well-researched in-depth special reports on topics like water quality, carbon storage, harvest methods, wildlife habitat and wildfire. To defund OFRI would deprive Oregon school children and teachers of a valuable educational resource.

Forest management is extremely complex. Not only are we continually learning about the interconnection between all the ecological components that make up a health, sustainable forest, but we need to continually work to better balance the economic and social factors with these ecological components. OFRI, with its public and landowner educational programs, workshops, is an important asset for landowners to educate themselves in these complex items. OFRI produces relevant and well-researched in-depth special reports on topics like water quality, carbon storage, harvest methods, wildlife habitat and wildfire. Without OFRI, Oregon Envirothon will cease to serve its students immediately and Oregon will become the only U.S. State to shut down their Envirothon Program. They provide 90% of Oregon Envirothon's funding and our only staff through in-kind contribution. We must always support the education of future generations. They are our future." OFRI has done just that. They have helped us educate future generations and they need to continue to do so.

Please oppose HB3019, HB2298, & HB 3025