

Testimony on SB 530 to Senate Committee on Natural Resources, 2/15/23

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Girod, and Members of the Committee: My name is John Christensen, and I'm a family forest owner in the Corbett area of east Multnomah County. I and many colleagues who are small forest owners support SB 530, which will help maximize carbon sequestration and improve the resilience of Oregon's forests, agricultural lands, wetlands, and natural resource economies.

In the forest we manage, we have witnessed the devastating effects of climate change that has brought more stress to our trees. Following the heat dome of two years ago, many of our Douglas fir showed signs of heat stress, as was true throughout the Willamette Valley and the Cascade foothills. The threat of devastating wildfire to our forests is more imminent. In the Eagle Creek fire of 2017, we had to evacuate our farm, as did many of our neighbors in the Corbett area.

Natural Climate Solutions are a win-win for Oregon's climate and for farmers, ranchers, forest owners, and entire communities across the state: The same practices that sequester and store carbon also make our lands and waters more resilient to climate-fueled drought, wildfires, and extreme temperatures. In our forest in Corbett, we have already entered into an agreement to sequester carbon by allowing trees to grow longer before harvesting. We have completed a forest carbon inventory of our forest, and we are now selling carbon credits on the voluntary exchange. I believe SB 530 would provide the technical assistance and incentives to many of my fellow forest owners to benefit from these natural climate solutions.