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February 27, 2023

Senate Committee on Natural Resources
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Public Testimony in Opposition to SB 795

Tualatin Riverkeepers (TRK) is a community-based organization that protects and restores the Tualatin River watershed. We build watershed stewardship through engagement, advocacy, restoration, access, and education. The Tualatin watershed provides drinking water for over half a million people, and its headwaters begin in the Tillamook State Forest. We write to oppose SB 795, which is written to give counties sole authority in obtaining and overseeing state forest lands.

The Board of Forestry was created to act as a bipartisan overseeing entity that balances multiple interests on state forests. If state forest land ownership were to be handed over to the counties, interests in timber revenues and funding for local services would supersede any other forest land value. This would leave timber harvest unchecked and could lead to devastating clear cuts that impact recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, and water quality. These forests are held in trust for all Oregonians, not just for the counties in which they reside. The State trusted the Board of Forestry to manage state forests for the “greatest permanent value.” ORS § 530.050. The State should continue to trust the Board to make the right decisions that affect our forests.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victoria Frankeny". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Victoria" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Frankeny".

Victoria Frankeny [she/her]
Riverkeeper & Staff Attorney
Tualatin Riverkeepers
victoria@tualatinriverkeepers.org