



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

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State Land Board

February 15, 2024

Tina Kotek

Governor

To: Senator Michael Dembrow, Co- Chair
Representative Khanh Pham, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources

LaVonne Griffin-Valade

Secretary of State

From: Vicki L. Walker, Director, Oregon Department of State Lands

Tobias Read

State Treasurer

Re: Elliott State Research Forest Presentation

The Oregon Department of State Lands appreciates the opportunity to provide an update on continued collaborative work to establish the Elliott State Research Forest. We are pleased to submit the attached materials related to our testimony at the February 19, 2024, hearing before your Subcommittee, as well as links to the below supporting materials that will be referenced during our presentation.

- **Written Report to the Legislative Assembly on SB 1546 (2022), as amended by SB 161 (2023).**
On Feb. 14, 2024, on behalf of the State Land Board, the Department submitted a required [report to the Legislature](#) regarding the status of SB 1546. The legislation required completion of six enabling actions by Dec. 31, 2023 (as per SB 161's amendment of SB 1546 in 2023) for the bill's provisions to become operative and create the Elliott State Research Forest, a new governance structure, and various management policies and authorities.

Four of the six enabling actions were completed by the Department and the State Land Board, with a fifth on track for completion, by the statutory deadline. But completion of all six enabling actions was necessary for SB 1546's vision for the Elliott State Research Forest to take effect. Because OSU leadership decided in November 2023 not to request a Board of Trustees vote to participate in management by December 31, 2023, SB 1546's principal direction and provisions have not become law.

Despite SB 1546 not becoming operational, the Department and State Land Board remain committed to the Elliott State Research Forest's creation and principal direction advanced by the Legislature, as demonstrated in the below pathway framework and workplan for advancing the research forest in 2024.

- **The State Land Board’s Pathway Framework for the Elliott State Research Forest.** In December 2023, the State Land Board affirmed its continued commitment to advancing the Elliott State Research Forest and supported a [pathway framework](#) outlining key actions, steps, and considerations for the Research Forest’s creation in 2024 under the Department’s management. The pathway framework directs the Department to:
 - Craft and implement a DSL management structure to oversee operations.
 - Create a structure for public engagement, accountability and oversight of the forest.
 - Complete the Habitat Conservation Plan and obtain federal permits needed to resume management activity on the long-idle forest.
 - Advance a Forest Management Plan to guide Department management and State Land Board oversight of the forest.
 - Craft a business plan including near-term budget needs for DSL management as well as long-term revenue plans related to timber harvest, carbon, state and federal funds.
 - Resolve partnership conversations and identify the forest’s research entity, looking to Oregon State University first.
- **FY 2024 Elliott State Research Forest Workplan.** With the guidance of an advisory group that includes members of the original Elliott State Research Forest Advisory Committee and SB 1546’s prospective board of directors, the Department has developed a [FY 2024 workplan](#) for implementing the State Land Board’s pathway framework.

As part of work to continue establishment of the Elliott State Research Forest, the workplan also calls for the continued meaningful engagement of Tribal governments, other government entities, people and groups with expertise and perspectives regarding the forest, potential partners, and the public.

Tribal engagement has been a focus throughout the multi-year effort to explore and advance an Elliott State Research Forest. Natural resources staff from the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians (CTCLUSI); the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians; and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde participated in the Elliott Advisory Committee that agreed upon the Research Forest’s foundational design. The Department has and will continue to engage in staff conversations and formal consultation so long as desired by Tribes.

The Department has appreciated past and ongoing meaningful conversations with the CTCLUSI regarding its interests and recent concerns over the Elliott State Research Forest. The Department has made significant revisions to the HCP and overall management approach directly relevant to advancing outcomes of interest to the Tribe. We are happy to provide more information or detail related to this if desired. [A summary of these efforts to-date is here.](#)

Thank you for the opportunity to share our excitement for the Elliott State Research Forest. We look forward to our presentation on Monday.