

HB 3349 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

Action Date: 04/01/25

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference.
(Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 6-0-1-0

Yeas: 6 - Boice, Grayber, Lewis, Skarlatos, Tran, Watanabe

Exc: 1 - Evans

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Beverly Anderson, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 3/25, 4/1

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure adds to the authority of the State Forestry Department, creates the Rangeland Protection Association Fund, and makes changes to the authority of the State Forester.

Detailed Summary

- Allows the State Forestry Department, notwithstanding ORS 283.310 and ORS 283.315, to control and regulate disposal and access of department vehicles; authorizes the sale or transfer of ownership of state vehicles to Rangeland Protection Associations.
- Allows the department to provide funding to rangeland protection associations; assist associations with pursuing federal grant funding.
- Establishes the Rangeland Protection Association Fund; consisting of legislative appropriations, grant funds, or other funds. Continuously appropriates funds to the department. Clarifies the fund consists of legislative appropriations and other funds.
- Clarifies language in ORS 477.317; allows the department to assist associations with maintaining vehicles, supplies, and other equipment.
- Allows the State Forester and an association can purchase, dispose of, or contract for goods, services, supplies, equipment and motor vehicles for the prevention, mitigation and suppression of fire on forestland, other land or both. Includes new or depreciated supplies or equipment.
- Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Examples of the work of the Rangeland Fire Protection Associations, including their response to recent wildfires
- Questions about the age and condition of donated vehicles the associations receive, and the estimated cost of maintenance and upkeep
- Questions about whether the associations are able to apply for SPIRE grants

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Allows the State Forestry Department, notwithstanding ORS 283.310 and ORS 283.315, to control and regulate disposal and access of department vehicles.

BACKGROUND:

Rangeland fire protection associations operate as independent associations of landowners that provide local wildfire protection. According to the Oregon Department of Forestry, the department supports these associations through administrative guidance, administrative cost reimbursement, fire suppression training, and facilitating

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access to federal grants and surplus firefighting equipment.