

SB 147 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Action Date: 04/08/25

Action: Do pass with amendments and requesting referral to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Engrossed.)

Vote: 5-0-0-0

Yeas: 5 - Girod, Golden, Nash, Prozanski, Taylor

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: Has minimal revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 3/20, 4/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure renames the Elliott State Forest to the Elliott State Research Forest and transfers management responsibilities from the State Board of Forestry to the State Land Board.

Detailed Summary:

State Land Board Responsibilities and Management of the Elliott State Research Forest

Directs the State Land Board to manage, control, and protect the Elliott State Forest for the dedicated purpose of maintaining a world-class research forest. Authorizes the Department of State Lands (DSL) to adopt and implement rules, policies, and management plans; enter into intergovernmental agreements; and establish advisory committees to maintain the forest. Expands the authority of the DSL Director to procure goods and services necessary for forest management without being subject to the Public Contracting Code. Prohibits the State Land Board from selling any lands within the forest.

Authorizes the State Land Board to approve forest land expansions or exchanges, provided the changes consolidate the forest and the exchanged land or timber is of approximately equal value, with boundaries defined by official resolution after such acquisitions. Specifies that any county-owned lands exchanged or acquired within the forest area can only be exchanged or acquired if the county court or board of commissioners is notified of the proposed exchange and given the opportunity to consult, coordinate, and provide comments. The Board is required to offer adequate compensation to the county for the exchange.

Establishment of the Elliott State Research Forest Account

Establishes the Elliott State Research Forest Account within the State Treasury, authorizing all revenue from forest operations to be deposited into this account, with interest credited back. Continuously appropriates funds to the State Land Board for forest management purposes. Authorizes Board to accept gifts, grants, donations, and bequests from public and private sources to enhance forest management activities, such as recreation, education, research, cultural resource management, and habitat improvement. Authorizes the Board to apply for and use grants from any source requires maintaining of detailed financial records.

Expands the definition of "financing agreement" to finance capital projects or purchases related to owning, operating or administering the research forest (ORS 283.085).

Amends the following statutes to remove provisions relating to the former Elliott State Forest:

- State Board of Forestry's management responsibilities of the Elliott State Forest (ORS 530.490, 530.510)
- Requirement that all revenue from the Elliott State Forest be paid into the Common School Fund and removes the Elliott State Forest as a beneficiary of the Common School Forest Revolving Fund (ORS 530.520).
- Elliott State Forest from the definition of "State Forestland" (ORS 30.949).

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Repeals ORS 530.540 (Withdrawal from sale of Elliott State Research Forest).

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Timber harvesting processes, appeals, and conservation plans
- Habitat conservation
- Forest management plan
- Department of State Lands contracting authority changes

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

The amendment replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

The Elliott State Forest is a 91,000-acre forest located in Coos and Douglas Counties in the central Oregon Coast Range. It was established in 1930 as Oregon's first state forest and has been overseen by the State Land Board and managed by the Department of State Lands (DSL) as a Common School Fund land asset since its inception. In October 2024, the State Land Board officially established the Elliott State Research Forest as a public research forest, created in collaboration between Oregon State University and DSL.