

B-Engrossed House Bill 3349

Ordered by the House June 19
Including House Amendments dated April 4 and June 19

Sponsored by Representative OWENS; Representatives BREESE-IVERSON, GRAYBER, LEVY B, LEVY E, MCINTIRE, RESCHKE, SMITH G (at the request of former Senator Lynn Findley)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: The Act allows an agency to take certain actions related to items used for fighting fires. The Act makes changes related to groups that fight fires in certain rural areas. The Act creates a new fund for providing moneys and items to groups. (Flesch Readability Score: 70.8).

Authorizes the State Forestry Department to take certain actions related to motor vehicles and other equipment used by the department.

Instructs and authorizes the department to take certain actions related to rangeland protection associations.

Establishes the Rangeland Protection Association Fund. **Appropriates moneys to the fund and establishes an expenditure limitation for the fund.**

Makes certain changes related to the authority of the State Forester to assist rangeland protection associations.

Authorizes the State Forester and forest protection associations to acquire or dispose of goods, services or equipment for the prevention, mitigation or suppression of fire on forestland.

Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

Relating to fire protection; creating new provisions; amending ORS 477.317 and 477.406; and declaring an emergency.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. Sections 2 to 4 of this 2025 Act are added to and made a part of ORS 477.315 to 477.325.

SECTION 2. Notwithstanding ORS 283.310 and 283.315, the State Forestry Department may:

(1) Control and regulate the disposal of and access to motor vehicles, and other equipment, that are used by the department.

(2) Authorize the State Forester to transfer ownership of depreciated firefighting vehicles and related depreciated equipment and supplies, by sale or donation, to a rangeland protection association upon terms that are mutually agreed to by the forester and the rangeland protection association.

SECTION 3. The State Forestry Department:

(1) May provide funding to rangeland protection associations for firefighting and rangeland fire readiness.

(2) Shall assist rangeland protection associations with pursuing federal grant funding for volunteers to assist with firefighting and for rural fire readiness.

SECTION 4. (1) The Rangeland Protection Association Fund is established in the State

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

Treasury, separate and distinct from the General Fund.

(2) The Rangeland Protection Association Fund consists of moneys appropriated by the Legislative Assembly for deposit in the fund and other moneys appropriated, allocated, deposited or transferred to the fund by the Legislative Assembly or otherwise.

(3) Moneys in the fund are continuously appropriated to the department for purposes described in sections 2 (2) and 3 of this 2025 Act.

SECTION 5. ORS 477.317 is amended to read:

477.317. (1) The forester may enter into cooperative agreements or contracts with a rangeland protection association under the provisions of ORS 477.320 for the purpose of providing the assistance *[specified in subsection (2)]* **described in subsections (2) and (3) of this section.**

(2) The forester may assist **a rangeland protection association** with:

(a) Organizing *[a]* **the** rangeland protection association~~*[,]*~~.

(b) Training *[association]* members **of the rangeland protection association** ~~*[and]*~~.

(c) Acquiring **or maintaining** firefighting **vehicles, supplies and other** equipment for the **rangeland protection** association, **including as described in ORS 477.406 and section 2 of this 2025 Act.**

(d) *[The forester may also assist a rangeland protection association with]* Payment for liability insurance and other administrative expenses of the **rangeland protection** association.

(3) *[The insurance and administrative expense assistance]* **A payment described in subsection (2)(d) of this section** may not:

(a) Exceed 50 percent of the total of budgeted operating costs and the cash equivalent of in-kind supplies and services of the **rangeland protection** association in any fiscal year.

(b) *[The costs of assistance specified in this subsection may not]* Be paid from funds assessed from forestland owners under ORS 477.230.

SECTION 6. ORS 477.406 is amended to read:

477.406. (1) **For the prevention, mitigation and suppression of fire on forestland or on land other than forestland, or both,** the forester and a forest protective association may:

(a) **Jointly or separately purchase and dispose of, or contract for, goods, services, supplies, equipment or motor vehicles.**

(b) Enter into a contract or agreement with each other or, jointly or separately, with a federal or state agency, political subdivision, corporation, responsible organization or responsible landowner or group of landowners *[for the prevention and suppression of fire on forestland or on land other than forestland, or both, to prevent and suppress fire]*.

(2) Contracts and agreements under subsection (1) of this section, and all renewals and revisions thereof, must be negotiated in accordance with procedures specified by rules of the State Board of Forestry.

(3) The forester and a forest protective association may enter into a contract or agreement for the accomplishment of forestry related activities.

(4) Contracts and agreements between the forester and a forest protective association under subsections (1) and (2) of this section may include the purchase from the forester of supplies and equipment, **whether new or depreciated, that is** needed to provide and support fire protection services.

SECTION 7. **In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropriated to the State Forestry Department, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$1,000,000, for deposit in the Rangeland Protection Association**

1 Fund established under section 4 of this 2025 Act.

2 SECTION 8. Notwithstanding any other law limiting expenditures, the amount of
3 \$1,000,000 is established for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, as the maximum limit for
4 payment of expenses by the State Forestry Department, from the Rangeland Protection As-
5 sociation Fund established under section 4 of this 2025 Act.

6 SECTION 9. This 2025 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public
7 peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2025 Act takes effect
8 on its passage.

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