

Submitter: Gina Mayonado

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3103

Dear Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 3103 and its amendments. This bill prioritizes timber harvest over other vital values on our state forests and, if passed, would have significant negative consequences for wildlife, our environment, and the future of our public lands.

HB 3103 would require the state forester to set timber harvest targets by rule, undermining existing policies that protect fish and wildlife habitat, clean water, and recreation. This bill would override the important work of the Board of Forestry, which has strived to balance environmental protections with timber harvest goals.

Furthermore, HB 3103 directly undermines the new State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), which provides essential protection for 17 species of salmon and wildlife listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) is currently following the guidelines of the HCP while waiting for final approval from federal agencies. HB 3103 would prevent the use of the HCP until it is federally approved, which could delay vital habitat protections for years, potentially allowing clearcuts in sensitive areas that are meant to be safeguarded.

The bill also stands in opposition to Oregon's Climate Change and Carbon Plan, which the Board of Forestry adopted in 2021. This plan positions Oregon as a national leader in climate-smart forestry, aimed at protecting our forests' ability to sequester carbon. HB 3103 would preempt this climate plan by requiring the establishment of rigid harvest targets that conflict with our climate goals.

Finally, HB 3103 would result in more litigation, creating an avenue for lawsuits that could force the Oregon Department of Forestry to increase clearcuts on public lands. This would only create more conflict, delay, and potentially harm the very ecosystems we aim to protect.

I strongly urge you to oppose HB 3103. Instead, I encourage this committee to focus on measures that protect our state forests, safeguard our wildlife and natural resources, and promote responsible management that benefits future generations.

Please do not let this bill pass out of committee.

Sincerely,
Gina Mayonado