

Submitter: Eugene Johnson

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3103

To our Oregon legislators:

For the greatest part of the more than 200 years that our region has been known as the State of Oregon, we have emphasized only profit in our approach to managing forest lands. It is only quite recently in Oregon's history that we have awakened to the reality that our forests -- once seemingly infinite -- were disappearing at a rate that was not only economically unsustainable from a purely timber and wood products perspective, but also wreaking damage to the land and the intricate relationships that we now clearly understand ensure our own welfare. Our shift in emphasis from viewing forests and wood products taken from them as a purely "net present value", ie., cash-in-hand, resource to that of viewing our remaining intact forest eco-systems as critically important to all creatures, including our people, is only sensible and prudent.

From what I have just read in the language of this bill HB 3103, its explicit intention is to return to the times past when our laws emphasized only profit. As an engineer whose career has made extensive use of models and modeling of complex systems, I know how fallible such models generally turn out to be, in the hind-sight of years or decades. I also know that such models, and a focus on "net present value" of a resource or planned project, tend to exclude or minimize factors that are not directly (and immediately) translatable to cash flows. We now have more than enough evidence everywhere we look to see the trajectory of such planning, and the potential for disasters of many kinds at its end point is very clear.

I am urging you to vote against this bill for the reasons stated above. I have done and still am doing what I can as an engineer to move projects and people I am involved with toward what we have come to call a sustainable social, economic, and environmental way of life, which I believe is possible. I hope you wish to do the same as legislators.

Sincerely,

Eugene (Gene) Johnson