

Submitter: William Watson

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3103

If passed, HB 3103 will be an unsustainable burden on the back of Oregon's delicate, damaged, essential forest ecosystems. If they collapse, make no mistake, Oregon's communities, people and economy will suffer as well. Given the compromised condition of our forestland, and the ongoing climate crisis, it is no longer "sustainable" to privilege board feet over the other ecosystem services provided by healthy, established woodlands: such things as biodiversity, erosion abatement, water purification, flood control, carbon sequestration, air quality protection and others. The people of Oregon need THESE ecosystem services more than they need expanded lumber production and logging on public lands.

Proponents of unrestricted logging--who have shaped Oregon politics for a century and more--have become accustomed to painting wildlands conservation as a luxury, something to worry about after the logging profits are securely in the bank, as a purely aesthetic concern of effete urbanites and intellectuals, who would sacrifice rural communities and livelihoods to their hobbies of hiking, fishing, camping, and philosophical contemplation. Big timber's caricatures of environmentalists were always self-serving, but whatever reality those stereotypes may have had in John Muir's day, they mean nothing now given the climate emergency and the ecological crisis. Romantic ideas of "nature" have been replaced by pragmatic concerns over the very survival of civilization.

Oregon needs healthy, old forests to make sure that posterity inherits sustainable communities, potable water, and a livable climate. More public lands logging will make those goals ever more remote. The expansion of public lands logging written into HB 3103 is not to any degree "sustainable." Please vote "No" on this potentially disastrous bill.