

Submitter: Stephanie Young

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3103

Dear Representatives,

I strongly oppose House Bill 3103, which would dramatically change our state forest management.

As someone who regularly hikes and backpacks through our state forests, I've developed a deep personal connection to these lands. It breaks my heart to come across clearcuts where majestic trees once stood. I've witnessed firsthand how these barren areas lack the diversity and life that make our forests special. Where I once spotted wildlife and enjoyed cool, clean streams, I now find eroded hillsides and silted waterways.

HB 3103's requirement for timber harvest targets would override essential protections for wildlife habitat, water quality, and recreation that benefit all Oregonians. The bill would undermine the pending State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan that protects endangered salmon and wildlife species. While awaiting federal approval, the bill would allow clearcutting in critical habitats, putting vulnerable species at serious risk.

I'm not against timber harvesting when done responsibly. However, I've seen how destructive practices damage ecosystems for generations. Walking through a recently clearcut area compared to a healthy forest is like comparing night and day. The silence in clearcut areas is profound – no birdsong, no rustling of wildlife. I've observed that protecting these habitats now is far less costly than attempting restoration later, if restoration is even possible.

Please oppose HB 3103 and support balanced forest management that protects our precious natural resources for all Oregonians.

Thank you,  
Stephanie