



COALITION OF OREGON LAND TRUSTS

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March 11th, 2025

To: Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources

From: The Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts

RE: Support for the 2025-2027 Budget for the Oregon Department of Forestry (S.B. 5521)

Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair Levy, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the Oregon Department of Forestry's (ODF) 2025-2027 budget. The Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts (COLT) is a membership organization representing 33 land trusts, soil and water conservation districts, and conservation organizations working across Oregon to protect our habitat and natural spaces – for all people, forever.

Oregon's forests provide critical habitat for wildlife, recreational opportunities, support local economies, protect community drinking water, and enhance our resilience to climate change. COLT member land trust and conservation organizations work closely with private landowners and local communities to protect Oregon's forests through programs like the Forest Legacy program and improve forest restoration and resiliency through S.B. 762 grant programs.

So far, our land trusts have protected iconic Oregon landscapes like the East Moraine Community Forest in Wallowa County, the Eugene Wetlands, the forests of Spence Mountain on Klamath Lake, Gilchrist State Forest, Blue Mountain Heritage Ranch, and Arch Cape Community Forest.

Department of Forestry programs are also critical for getting an approved Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) over the finish line before the December 2027 deadline



24 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS: Blue Mountain Land Trust • Center for Natural Lands Management • Columbia Land Trust
Deschutes Land Trust • Ducks Unlimited • Forest Park Conservancy • Friends of the Columbia Gorge Land Trust
Greenbelt Land Trust • Klamath Lake Land Trust • Lower Nehalem Community Trust • McKenzie River Trust
North Coast Land Conservancy • Northwest Rangeland Trust • Oregon Agricultural Trust • Oregon Desert Land Trust
Pacific Forest Trust • Southern Oregon Land Conservancy • The Conservation Fund • The Nature Conservancy in Oregon
The Trust for Public Land • The Wetlands Conservancy • Wallowa Land Trust • Western Rivers Conservancy • Wild Rivers Land Trust

8 ASSOCIATE MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS: Black Oregon Land Trust • Cerro Gordo Land Conservancy • Clackamas Soil & Water
Conservation District • East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District • Helvetia Community Association
Tualatin Soil & Water Conservation District • View the Future • Yamhill Soil & Water Conservation District

reverts private forest practices to pre-Private Forest Accord guidelines, undermining years of work, compromise, and legislative investments.

As our state faces increasing pressures from development, large-scale impacts of drought and wildfire, and stresses on community water supplies from summer tourism, it is critical this Committee prioritize additional funding for the Department outside of the investments included in the Governor's Recommended Budget (GRB).

In addition to the GRB investments in ODF's 2025-2027 Budget, COLT is respectfully request that this Committee support the following three priorities:

1. \$6 million to support continued work of the Adaptive Management Program Committee (AMPC)

The Adaptive Management Program Committee helps to guide the adaptive management process and research agenda for the Independent Research and Science Team (IRST) established in S.B. 1501.

The AMPC serves in an advisory capacity to the Board of Forestry and determines if forestry practices are meeting goals to protect natural resources through a science-based and transparent process, providing regulatory certainty and guiding the overall policy and process of the IRST.

The AMPC was underfunded at \$4 million in the 2023-2025 biennium. Continuing to underfund this program will make it impossible to conduct the research necessary to assess the effectiveness of the rules and meet the standards of an approvable HCP. The Department of Forestry has identified \$6 million in biennium funding needed to support both the AMPC and IRST work.

2. Continued funding for S.B. 762 fire resilience programs: \$10 million for Landscape Resiliency and \$2.5 million for Small Forestland Grants.

As Oregon grapples with ever-intense, prolonged, and devastating wildfire seasons, programs that work to reduce wildfire risk on public and private lands are critical investments. The S.B. 762 Landscape Resiliency Program funds landscape-scale projects to reduce wildfire risk on lands and in communities through restoration of landscape resiliency and reduction of hazardous fuels.

S.B. 762 also required the development of the 20-Year Landscape Resiliency Strategy that targets high-risk acres of forest and rangelands to reduce wildfire risk. The GRB includes no additional funding for this program and the legislature has yet to provide the grant programs with permanent project funding.

The Department of Forestry has identified \$10 million in biennium funding needs for the Landscape Resiliency program and \$2.5 million for the Small Forestland Grant program.



1. POP 105: \$28 million increase in federal funds limitation authority to enable the Forest Resources Division to leverage additional federal funds through the Forest Legacy Program.

COLT members use the federal Forest Legacy program to protect private forestland through conservation easements and land purchases. This program helps prevent the fragmentation and conversion of some of Oregon's most iconic forested landscapes while supporting sustainable harvesting and providing recreational opportunities.

POP 105 requests a permanent, biennial \$28 million increase in federal funds limitation authority to enable the Department to leverage increased federal funding through the Forest Legacy and Community Forestry programs and advance the Vision for Oregon's Forests priorities and goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments as this Committee works to develop the 2025-2027 Department of Forestry budget.

Sincerely,



Joe Buttafuoco
Executive Director
Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts

