

Submitter: Leslie Fager

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3846

Committee Chair and members of the committee,

I strongly oppose House Bill 3846. This represents a significant overreach, more than doubling ODF's managed acreage and creating a severe capacity shortfall. The agency is ill-equipped to handle the recreational, restoration, and wildfire response demands of such a vast area, given their existing budget and leadership challenges.

Without the U.S. Forest Service's multiple-use approach, the bill risks pushing the Ochoco towards timber harvest as the primary focus. This could lead to environmental degradation, habitat destruction, and reduced public access. The bill also lacks transparency regarding projected revenue and how ODF would fund this undertaking, raising serious concerns about financial sustainability and accountability.

Additionally, HB 3846 introduces jurisdictional complications, creating uncertainty for the people, businesses, and Tribes who depend on the Ochoco. The long-term lease poses a threat of irreversible environmental damage, impacting water quality, biodiversity, and carbon sequestration. This bill disregards the public's interest in preserving the Ochoco National Forest for future generations, prioritizing potential timber interests over ecological integrity and public access.

I urge the committee to reject this misguided legislation and prioritize the responsible stewardship of our public lands.

Sincerely,
Leslie Fager