

Submitter: Caroline Zaworski
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On
Natural Resources
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5009

Dear Co-Chairs Frederick and Levy, and Members of the Committee:

I write as a long-time resident of Oregon deeply committed to protecting the natural environment we are privileged to steward in this state. I have been active in preservation and sustainability work throughout the last several decades. I am urging your support of the necessary funding to fulfill our previous commitments to maintaining our resources.

The Private Forest Accord (PFA) was a landmark agreement regarding Oregon's logging rules on private forestlands. Thirteen timber industry representatives and 13 conservation and fishing groups came together to negotiate broad reforms to state law. It provides significant new protections for fish, stream-dwelling amphibians, wildlife in the forests adjacent to streams, for cold clean water, and for the people who rely on these resources.

A key part of the agreement calls for the state of Oregon to get a federally approved Habitat Conservation Plan across more than 10 million acres of private forestlands.

However, without a federally approved Private Forest Accord Habitat Conservation Plan by 2027, the new rules roll back entirely to the outdated standards. I understand the current challenges to federal funding, but we must fight for them.

Please support full funding in the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's budget (HB 5009) for the Private Forest Accord Grant Program. The PFA Grant Program should be fully funded at \$20M. This reflects the state's commitment of \$10M annually to this grant program under the PFA authorizing legislation from 2022 (SB 1501). Importantly, this commitment is matched by a \$2.5M annual contribution from the timber industry, which increases to \$5M annually after federal approval of a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). This program invests in restoration projects across the state to conserve and protect habitat for fish and amphibians.

Thanks for your consideration,

Caroline Zaworski