

Submitter: Sheri Smith

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:

The Private Forest Accord (PFA) was a landmark agreement regarding Oregon's logging rules on private forestlands. There were a whopping thirteen timber industry representatives and 13 conservation and fishing groups that came together to negotiate broad reforms to state law. It provides significant new and needed 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. We all rely on fresh water!

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a federally approved Private Forest Accord Habitat Conservation Plan by 2027, the new rules roll back entirely to the outdated and harmful standards.

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.

We must protect what's left of Oregon's dwindling forest land if we hope to share these beautiful spaces with our kids. Please step up for future generations. Oregon's conservation success benefits all.

Thanks for your consideration,

Sheri Rose Smith