

Submitter: Katrina Robb
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4105

Dear Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, and Members of the Committee,

I oppose House Bill 4105 and its amendments. This bill would prioritize clearcutting Oregon forests over other critical values such as clean drinking water, clean air, wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation. Our state forests are worth more standing — it is unacceptable to prioritize timber harvest over all the other values these forests offer.

At a critical time for the climate of our planet, now is not the time to clearcut such an incredible resource. The livelihoods of the residents of Oregon depend on strong, resilient forests. Our State Forests alone provide drinking water for over half a million people, shelter six salmon stronghold rivers, and sustain imperiled species like the marbled murrelet, coastal marten, and red tree vole. This bill would undermine protection for 17 species of salmon and wildlife that are listed under the federal Endangered Species Act.

This bill would undermine ODF's ability to implement its Climate Change and Carbon Plan (Climate Plan). It would result in more lawsuits and could cost the state millions of dollars.

This bill would also result in more clearcuts and less habitat for vulnerable fish and wildlife. It would lead to less mature and old-growth forests, and less carbon storage on the landscape at a time when climate change is becoming more severe. Let this dry mild warm winter be a lesson we can learn from. Large, older trees store a disproportionately high amount of carbon and continue to sequester carbon throughout their centuries long lifetimes.

This bill does not represent the public lands vision I want my elected leaders to support. The harvest rule could also undermine the Governor's Executive Order 25-26 to preserve an additional 10% of Oregon's land and waters in ten years, with state forests leading by example.

I strongly urge you to oppose this bill. Instead, I encourage this committee to focus on measures that would protect Oregon legacy forests, safeguard fish and wildlife, and protect communities drinking water for our children and future generations.

Our forests support clean flowing rivers for salmon, critical habitat for a wide range of

wildlife, recreation areas, and a robust outdoor economy. The State Forester already sets sustainable harvest levels consistent with the mandate to manage state forests for “Greatest Permanent Value” for all Oregonians and reports this to the public. That is enough.

Oregon’s mature and old-growth forests (also called legacy forests) are widely recognized for their essential role in fighting climate change, protecting watershed integrity, and safeguarding fish and wildlife. Decades of logging have left a severe deficit of old-growth forests on Oregon’s state lands.

Please oppose this bill and ensure it does not pass out of committee.

Sincerely,