

Submitter: T. Clark

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4105

I oppose his bill. I work in Natural Resources in Oregon, and I understand intimately how dependent rural communities are on the products that come from our forests, and I support using our forests in such a way that provides income for counties, municipalities, and school districts. But this bill is sneaky. It's not about having a transparent forest management plan for our state forest land (we already have that). It's all about giving certain parties the legal right to sue their way into increased timber harvest. Oregon public forest management is designed around the idea of "greatest permanent value" which means managing for forest products, carbon sequestration, drinking watersheds, wildlife habitat, and recreation. This bill seeks to redefine Oregon forest management within the confines of "sustainable" timber harvest, which precludes all of the other values that are so important to true sustainability. If this bill is passed and the State Forester is directed to magically come up with new targets for allowable cut, you can guarantee certain parties will have a megaphone pointed in her ear telling her more, more, more, more. And when ODF can't hit those targets because of understaffing, or a bad log market, or weather, or a lack of loggers, or any number of reasons, the industry and groups that represent their interest will be all too happy to waste both theirs and Oregonian's money with lawsuits that force ODF into haphazard and unneeded harvests that benefit only one side of the equation. If we all decide together that we want more timber harvests, we need to devise a new schema that combines fuel reduction treatments and thinning for forest health to ensure that we actually continue to have timber to harvest in the future. If someone has told you that the industry standard clearcut is good for fire resiliency, or wildlife, or erosion, or absolutely anything besides quick profit, you have been told a lie. It is not true. I support active forest management. But not the way that industry wants to do it, and not at the barrel of their gun.