



May 25, 2022

Molalla City Council

Dear Council:

Oregon Department of Forestry Habitat Conservation Plan

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you tonight about the States Proposed Habitat Conservation Plan and draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). As some of you may already know the Oregon Department of Forestry is embarking on a Habitat Conservation Plan to cover the State Forests of Northwest Oregon, which on the surface may sound like a good idea but after reading the draft EIS the its clear that the plan will have some severe consequences as a result. Current Iterations show a 50% reduction in available acreage for harvest from state forests, which would severely reduce the annual output of timber sold from state forests and forecasts show that the revenue generated from reduced harvests will not support operating costs of the department, making them rely on general fund dollars which they do not currently do.

Interfor operates a sawmill in Molalla, OR and employs 125 people. We currently produce around 180 Million Board Feet of lumber per year and directly employ 125 people at our mill. We also operate a sawmills in Philomath, OR, and Longview, WA which both employ about the same amount of people and rely on State Forest Volume for a portion of their timber supply. Oregon Forest Industries Council estimates that approximately 11 jobs are created with the harvest of 1 million board feet of timber. For just our Molalla mill that equals about 825 jobs that are supported by our operation, many of those jobs are here in Molalla. During the scoping process for the draft EIS many mills were not contacted about employment numbers and potential effects of reduced harvest from state forests.

In our current situation in the aftermath of the 2020 wildfires 100's of thousands of acres burned locally which will effectively put those acres off the table for available harvest for at least the next 40 years. The United States Forest Service is planning on reducing harvest levels in region 6(Oregon and Washington) by 200 million board feet per year for the next 5 years, and in Oregon private forests will subject to new laws that will reduce available acres for harvest with increased stream buffers on private lands. All of this reduction is expected to take out 7 sawmills in Oregon over the next 40 years. In the meantime we are also dealing with increased fire prevalence on the landscape and millions of acres in need of forest management treatments. Reducing harvest on public lands will effectively reduce the contractor pool available to treat acres in need, this coupled with the disappearance of sawmills will reduce our states capacity to process logs that would come from these treatments.

As an industry collectively we would like for the state to re-analyze the EIS and their proposed habitat conservation plan and put forth an alternative that would treat more acres to increase forest resilience to wildfire and insects and disease. If the state chooses not to do so our preference would be for them to choose option 5 in the HCP or the increased harvest alternative. With a good portion of the

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population of Molalla working in the forest products sector and lumber being one of the most important economic drivers in the City we ask for your support by sending a letter and comments to NOAA fisheries (EIS Preparer), the state forester and the board of forestry asking for more alternatives to be explored that would exclude fewer acres from harvest, and if they cannot do that at least choose option 5.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this important information and for your willingness to support the forest sector economy in Molalla.

Thanks,

Zach Haas

Senior Procurement Forester

Interfor Molalla Division