

# Modernizing Oregon's Forest Practices Act

A Comprehensive Reform Package for the 2017 Legislative Assembly



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**Oregon's Forest Practices Act (OFPA)** is one of the weakest forest practices laws in the region and has not been substantially improved since it was enacted in 1972.

Protections for drinking water supplies, soils, wildlife, fish, scenery and climate fall far below scientific standards as well as standards adopted by the federal government and neighboring states.

Economic incentives fail to promote best practices that achieve greatest permanent value of forestlands for the State's economy.

**Comprehensive reform should be a priority for the 2017 Legislative Assembly.**

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## Key provisions of a comprehensive reform package should include:

### **Forest management and timber harvest plans**

Large forestlands owners (>5,000 acres) will be required to file ten-year forest management plans to provide transparency and accountability to all affected stakeholders and to bolster the state's ability to protect public trust resources.

### **Limitations on cumulative watershed impacts**

Numerical criteria will be established in each forested watershed limiting the degree of annual impact from logging and logging roads.

### **Adequate buffers for all streams, rivers, wetlands, and other water resources**

Science-based buffers will be established along all streams and water bodies to reduce contamination from sediments, pesticides, herbicides, and thermal pollution.

### **Protection for Native American cultural sites, big legacy trees, plant community diversity and other special resources**

Native American sacred sites and other cultural and historic resources have no protection under the OFPA. Nor do medicinal, edible plants, rare plant communities, or sensitive sites for most wildlife species. This provision would require the Board of Forestry to promulgate rules to fill in the gaps.

### **Prohibitions on logging of sites with high landslide risk**

Clearcuts increase the rate of landslides by 200% and OFPA currently allows clearcutting on most high risk landslide locations.

### **Requirements for conservation and restoration of old growth forests**

Requires industrial forestland owners to set aside a portion of their lands for development of late successional and old growth forest conditions to meet regional conservation goals.

### **Flexibility for county, city, and water districts to enact more stringent regulations**

Removes needless restriction on the ability of local governments including water districts to adapt forest practice rules to local conditions to better protect at-risk resources.

### **Closure and decommissioning of hazardous logging roads**

This provision would require landowners to identify the most problematic roads and commit to programs to decommission or upgrade such roads to reduce sedimentation and remove barriers to fish passage.

### **Economic incentives – forest carbon tax and reward**

Taxes carbon dioxide emissions from unsustainable logging and clearcutting and invests revenues into forest practices that result in a continuous increase in carbon storage.