

## Private Forest Accord Reaches an Agreement



**Background:** In January 2020, conservation groups and a delegation of timberland owners signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to cooperatively pursue updates to Oregon's forest laws. The parties jointly crafted legislation for the 2020 session, which the Legislature ultimately passed by nearly unanimous margins in a late June special session. **SB 1602 (2020)** memorialized the **Private Forest Accord (PFA)** and increased drinking water protections through changes to aerial pesticide application, including implementation of the first ever electronic notification system for real-time communication of applications to neighbors, new reporting requirements, and increased buffers for homes, schools, drinking water intakes and streams. The bill also facilitated a mediated process to explore further changes to Oregon's Forest Practices Act based on best available science that would form the basis of an application to the federal services for an aquatic species Habitat Conservation Plan. **An agreement was reached on October 30, 2021.**

### Proposed changes to Oregon's Forest Practice laws significantly expand wildlife and water quality safeguards and create long-term stability for the timber industry:

#### ✓ **New Stream Buffers**

A scientifically valid stream buffering program to not only protect fish where they live, but to reduce sediment and create continuous habitat and conservative temperature buffers in the face of climate change. **Stream buffers will increase by 10%-100%** on tens of thousands of miles of forest streams, including **brand new buffers for non-fish perennial streams**. Flexibility exists for small forestland owners, but tax credits incentivize voluntary adherence to stricter rules.

#### ✓ **Improvements to Forest Roads**

The highest forest road building and maintenance standards with an aggressive, mandatory timeline for completion. This will ensure that all forest roads allow for fish migration and don't result in stream sedimentation. Changes include **new standards on road design, inventory/assessment, maintenance, and management** as well as **culvert replacement prioritization**.

#### ✓ **Innovative Modeling for Unstable Slopes**

A state-of-the-art unstable slopes management program that **allows land managers to identify and improve characteristics of natural landslides** to create quality fish habitat.

#### ✓ **Habitat Protection for Oregon's Iconic Species**

Fish (salmon, steelhead, bull trout) and amphibians (coastal giant salamander, Cope's giant salamander, coastal tailed frog) In addition, the PFA addresses reporting requirements for managing beavers.

#### ✓ **A Paradigm Shift in Forest Policy**

An **adaptive management framework** will change the way future forest practices are contemplated with science-based recommendations to the Board of Forestry to inform adjustments in regulations to achieve resource goals and objectives identified in the Habitat Conservation Plan and other guidance. Changes also include increased rule **compliance and monitoring effectiveness**.

#### ✓ **Funding for Habitat Mitigation**

The agreement includes **mitigation payments to fund projects** that contribute additional ecological lift beyond the extensive investment in additional buffers. The forest products industry will contribute \$5 million per year for mitigation, the State \$10 million.

\*\*The deal also includes a commitment to attempt to negotiate an agreement on post-fire logging in riparian management areas and instructs the Board of Forestry to commence rulemaking on tethered logging within three years.

Timber Signatories to the Private Forest Accord

