

## Are We Putting the Forest to Sleep? Part 2: What Went Wrong

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**Chris Edwards:** Welcome to Forestry Smart Policy, a podcast produced by the Oregon Forest Industries Council for policy makers and other thought leaders influencing decisions in Oregon. I'm Chris Edwards, your host and president of OFIC. In this episode, I sit down with Tyler Ernst, Policy Counsel for Manufacturing and Resources at OFIC. Tyler joined OFIC three years ago with more than 10 years of experience in natural resource policy and government relations. Prior to joining OFIC, Tyler served as Assistant General Counsel for the Michigan Farm Bureau, worked as a staffer in the Washington, DC office of a Western state senator, and worked in the Michigan Department of Attorney General's Office during law school. Tyler holds a BS in Microbiology from Michigan State University and a JD from the Michigan State University College of Law. In his role as Policy Counsel, Tyler represents OFIC's members and policy discussions before the state legislature and various natural resource agencies and commissions. In the second episode of our two-part series, we really get into what went wrong with the department's draft Habitat Conservation Plan. The failure of the plan to provide adequate projected timber harvest levels to keep the department's budget whole and to adequately fund critical public services in rural Oregon. We also discussed the controversy and outcry at recent Board of Forestry meetings and the mounting pressure on the board. Without further delay, here's part two of my discussion with Tyler Ernst.

Tyler, we ended the last episode with you explaining the process for developing the HCP up until today. Now, moving forward, what does the department and or the board's process look like?

**Tyler Ernst:** So, as the department is developing this plan, they are providing periodic updates to their governing board, which is the Board of Forestry. And the members of the Board of Forestry are appointed by the governor. So, they're providing periodic updates. And as part of those updates, one of the things that they're providing to the board is an assessment of, if this plan moves forward as it's being drafted, what would this mean for harvest volume off of these lands? And of course, the Board of Forestry has a vested

interest in knowing that information because they're responsible for making sure that the department is operating according to budget. And as I noted earlier, a third of the revenues from timber sales off State Forests are going to go back to the department. Obviously, they also just have a broader duty to ensure that State Forests are being managed well. So, as they're being provided updates by the department, the department is running modeling to figure out, okay, based on the amount of lands that are going to be set aside under this HCP for habitat conservation, based on various growth models and harvest models, how much are we going to be able to pull off of these lands each year in harvest? And for context, the current 10-year average for harvest off of state forests, and this is pretty much all exclusive of the Elliott, because hardly anything comes off the Elliott anymore, is right around 250 million board feet.

**Chris Edwards:** 250 million board feet. It's a small piece of the pie, but it's the entire production for a mill in a year's time.

**Tyler Ernst:** Yeah, I mean, and we can get into that a little bit more later, but an analysis was done actually a couple of different analyses. One by the Oregon Forest Resource Institute, OFRI. Another very similar analysis was done up in Washington when the state of Washington was working on a state lands HCP. Both of them were remarkably similar in what they found, which is that every million board feet that's harvested equates to essentially 11 jobs, 11 forest sector jobs. And so then when you kind of trace those jobs to economic activity in these communities that are adjacent to these forests, I mean, you start to see the magnifying effect kicks in pretty quickly. And so it makes every million board feet 11 jobs essentially. I mean, so yeah, when you're talking about 250 million board feet, you might think of that in the context of the entire harvest across the state and think, oh, that's not a whole lot, but that's vitally important. That's essentially 2,500 jobs right there would be attributable to that volume. And when that gets reduced, I mean, we saw this with the Northwest Forest Plan in the 90s, when those reductions were coming down, it strikes fear into the psyche of individuals and families who are reliant on that. And they start to think, wow, there's no longer a future working in this sector.

**Chris Edwards:** And I have talked with many, many people, having grown up in the sector and having worked in the sector prior to my work in the public policy arena. I worked in a mill and showed up every day to work at the log yard and talk with the truck drivers and the equipment operators and all those folks. People were just always wondering, is there going to be a future? And especially young folks. They didn't know if they really wanted to commit to learning work in a sector that might not be stable in the future. And it just compounded the workforce challenges.

**Tyler Ernst:** Yeah, and frankly, I find it kind of laughable when anyone tries to downplay the impact of harvest reductions on these communities, because we have a case study. This happened in the early 90s. In these communities that were adjacent to federal forests and that lost not only direct revenue from those timber sales off of federal lands, but then lost the accompanying economic activity from it. You see that across Oregon today in these communities that were just devastated by that decision by the federal government to reduce harvest to essentially an inconsequential amount on these forests. And so, yeah, so these communities that are adjacent to these state forest lands are right to be concerned when they see that harvest might be reduced. But I'm getting ahead of myself because the question might be, okay, well, 10-year average, 250 million board feet, well, what's going to happen to that under the Habitat Conservation Plan? And kind of the refrain from the department to the Board of Forestry and to other interested stakeholders, that harvest level, that current harvest level, was actually going to be relatively unchanged under the Habitat Conservation Plan, at least at the very start. And so their models, they were running models, and their models showed that at the outset of this plan, and the plan has a 70-year duration, but at the outset the harvest level would still be close to that 10-year average, close to 250 million board feet. Now it would decrease over the life of the plan down to about 200 million board feet over 70 years. So the average, if you average it across, was right about in the middle, right around 225 million board feet. And so the department's refrain to the board, to stakeholders was, hey, this actually isn't going to adversely impact state harvests that much. So you don't really need to be alarmed. Obviously, people were still alarmed and concerned. Individuals from the timber industry, again, mostly these companies that own and operate mills in these areas adjacent to these forests, they were very concerned that the projections, the harvest projections that the department was setting might not actually accord with reality. And these local communities were concerned about it as well, and the counties, and the Council of Forest Trust Land Counties voiced concerns that they didn't actually think that this plan as proposed was sustainable. And so the Council of Forest Trust Land Counties got together to create an alternative for the department and the Board of Forestry to consider that they believed could still achieve a habitat conservation plan. Because when you submit a habitat conservation plan, a draft to the services, the services are never going to come back to you and tell you, hey, you're setting aside too much land here, right? I mean, that ratchet only works in one direction. So if you go to the services with a plan that hardly sets aside any land, they're going to say, yeah, that doesn't pass muster. But they're never going to go the opposite direction. And so the assertion of these counties were, hey, department, you can still obtain your ultimate goal of obtaining a habitat conservation plan, but you don't have to set aside quite this much land to get there.

**Chris Edwards:** And let's get it right from the beginning, because this is going to last for 70 years.

**Tyler Ernst:** That's right. And so they put forward an alternative, and I think it's just stunning, would have set aside, or I should say would have pulled from that set aside, only 2.8% of acres. So it would have taken the roughly 50 to 55%, and decreased that only to 53 to 48% of the state lands. And so they ran models as well to show you could get a lot more harvest just off of that 2.8% of acres. And so it would lead to a more sustainable harvest level and a more reliable harvest level that would do less economic harm to these communities and then to the mills that relied on the supply of fiber from these forests. The Board of Forestry rejected that plan late last year, so late 2022. And the reason that they rejected it was more or less, they said, and the department was backing them up on this, that, hey, we've come too far with our current draft, and to present a new plan now would just be... it would be setting us behind too much. We need to get this finalized. We need to get a habitat conservation plan in place. One of the factors that was leading to the sense of urgency is that there was a lawsuit filed by environmental advocates. It was filed, I think, in 2018 against the department saying, hey, department, your harvest activities and your management activities on the rest of your lands are unlawfully taking or harming coho salmon.

**Chris Edwards:** Even though coho are in recovery under the Oregon Plan?

**Tyler Ernst:** Yep. So they filed this lawsuit, and the department really kind of adopted a similar posture to this lawsuit as they did to the lawsuit over the Elliott State Forest, was they were very quick to accommodate an offer to settle out of court with the plaintiffs. Even though, to your point, coho are recovering, right? We see the data. I mean, the numbers are bouncing back.

**Chris Edwards:** I've been told, Tyler, that the numbers justify delisting now, but with application of the precautionary principle, just in case, let's wait one more population down and up cycle before we finalize that decision.

**Tyler Ernst:** Yeah, which I'll nerd out a little bit with you real quick, but you'll appreciate this, is that I would actually argue that that's a misapplication of the precautionary principle. The precautionary principle says, don't change what you're doing currently. So if you really wanted to approach management of State Forests using the precautionary principle, you'd say, hey, let's keep managing under the current plan, because it seems to be doing fine. But obviously, that's not what most people mean when they throw that term around.

**Chris Edwards:** I think that all of this... I mean, this is very much... this is very political, all of this. All of these conversations, the forces that are driving the conversations at the Board of Forestry, this is all... I mean, it is very political. And I think that the best policy is really born out of a synthesis of factors and considerations. But you have... I mean, we're talking about... what was the percentage? 2.8. Yeah, 2.8% difference in set-aside. Could have achieved all these other outcomes, more certainty for timber harvest, more certainty for counties. But the other side, the activist, just dug in. Because it seems more like a negotiation. And one of the principles of many successful negotiators is they just start from a nearly untenable position and then make the gives small and slight. But then when you have a decision being made by a politically appointed body, you cannot divorce the politics from all of this. So they're just going to pick that option rather than doing the work to say, okay, how can we synthesize all these factors and options to try to come up with a win-win?

**Tyler Ernst:** Yeah, that's right. And so that's what essentially you had last year in November at that Board of Forestry meeting when a motion was made to consider putting forward the alternative and submitting that to the services as well was that, you know, just kind of more or less, you know, let's just put our heads down and keep moving the direction we're moving because there's just too much momentum behind it. And, you know, we're afraid of what might happen if we don't. And part of that fear is fear of, I think, probably, personal reputations as well, right? And expectations of what it is that you're supposed to do in that role as a Board of Forestry member. So yeah, I mean, one of the kind of driving forces behind the Board's decision to just keep on moving forward with their current plan instead of considering this alternative was this lawsuit.

**Chris Edwards:** And the fear of similar lawsuits. And just another note about that coho lawsuit. I mean, again, we've kind of mentioned already why the facts really don't weigh in the plaintiff's favor. And that's not just us as biased industry representatives saying that. I mean, the plaintiffs filed for summary disposition, and the judge denied their motion for summary disposition.

**Tyler Ernst:** Now, that doesn't mean that the plaintiffs Pentagon naturally would have lost on the merits, but the judge said the facts are not so clear cut in your favor that I can just grant you a win without actually considering the case on the merits. And so the department already had that win on that motion for summary disposition, but they were still so afraid of litigating that case through to the conclusion that they determined we need to enter into settlement negotiations with the plaintiffs, and we are imperiling those settlement negotiations if we are not showing tangible movement towards a finalized Habitat Conservation Plan. So I will just kind of, I might return to the coho lawsuit again, but just for

anyone who's curious about where that lawsuit sits presently, the parties entered into a formal settlement agreement in December of 2022, and that stayed the case. And the stay actually went through the end of January of this year, so it was stayed for about a month. And so right now, I believe the case technically is not stayed. Someone who's listening to this is probably thinking, no, that was extended. If there was an extension to the stay, I'm not aware of it. So it's technically not stayed, but the parties are in settlement negotiations, trying to, again, hammer out a conclusion to the lawsuit out of court.

**Chris Edwards:** And I do think that it's important to talk about that lawsuit because both Board of Forestry members and officials inside the Department of Forestry have cited it as the reason that they need a habitat conservation plan post haste.

**Tyler Ernst:** Yeah, that's right. I mean, again, I think even public statements that have been made really support the assertion that I made earlier that that's one of the driving forces behind the department trying to expedite this process or keep it moving and not being willing to go back and look at alternatives. So anyway, whatever the constellation of reasons are that the department has continued to just move forward, not consider alternatives, that is what has happened. But again, someone might say, well, yeah, but the models projected that the harvest level would be close to that 10-year average at the outset of the plan. So what's the big deal? Well, the big deal is that the way that state forests are managed across Oregon, it's kind of split up into different management districts. The department develops the management plan for the state forest, and then that management plan is passed down to these districts. And then the districts take that plan, and then they produce a harvest projection based off of the details in that plan that the department has created. And so that's what happened. The department passed on this draft habitat conservation plan to the districts, and then the districts incorporated the management restrictions under that plan into their district plans, and those are known as implementation plans or IPs. And then in early February, February 2nd, the department published the district IPs. And so what those IPs show is really a more accurate projection of what harvest for a biennial period is going to look like. And when those draft IPs were published, what they showed is not a harvest level statewide of 250 million board feet, like the department was indicating would be the case, but instead, harvest levels of between 165 and 182 million board feet.

**Chris Edwards:** It's not even close.

**Tyler Ernst:** No, not even close. I mean, you talk about an 80 million board feet reduction, or put it in percentage terms, that's 30% reduction in harvest levels from the current 10-year average. So yeah, whoopsies is putting it mildly. And understandably, local communities, again, the mills that rely on that flow of fiber from the state forests, they

reacted swiftly, strongly. I mean, the concern was overwhelming from those areas, because now all of a sudden we're seeing, okay, the modeling that the department has been using was faulty. Because now that it's going through this more precise district-by-district modeling, we're seeing the degree of harvest is going to be way lower than it was projected to be and way lower than it currently is.

**Chris Edwards:** That's got to create some financial problems for the State Forest Division within the Department of Forestry, if not the entire department.

**Tyler Ernst:** Oh, absolutely it will. And when the department has been pressed on that, I've pressed personally members of the department on that question. I mean, they more or less kind of block and then change the subject. So they more or less say, well, hey, our numbers look good for the next two years. What comes after that, is anyone's guess? Well, it's not anyone's guess. We're now seeing what those numbers are probably going to look like, and it's not good. That means that the revenue that the department sees, that means revenue that counties see is going to be decreased by that same amount, by 30%. And in fact, what we've seen, so two of the districts that saw the largest reductions in these IPs were the Astoria District and the Forest Grove District. Those are two of the districts that historically have had the most harvest. And so those communities really stand to lose the most. The reductions in those districts were even greater than 30%. And so for those counties and those local communities and the various county and community services that rely on those revenues, I mean, they're looking at in one case, a 36% decrease in revenue in a couple years when this goes into effect. And that will happen at the department too. I mean, you look at what that 30% kind of works out to in raw dollars for the department, you're talking about over a biennial period, \$26 million in decreased revenue to the Department of Forestry. And you look at the budget of the State Forest Division, that's a not insubstantial part of its budget. And the State Forest Division doesn't only manage State Forest lands, doesn't only engage in necessary restoration activities on State Forest lands. A lot of those individuals that serve in that division are also used for emergency fire response during the height of wildfire season. But some of those State Forest Division employees also respond to fire during the height of the season. So you're talking about stripping a division of revenue that's a very essential division to the operation of that department and really for the well-being of the state. So, yeah, whether you're talking about a percentage or just raw dollars, you're talking about a major hit to the state and you're talking about a major hit to these counties and these local units of government.

**Chris Edwards:** It's a big deal locally to the counties and local governments, but even in the legislature. I can tell you from experience that things like \$26 million asks from

departments that could be covering all their own costs are super annoying to Ways and Means members and budget writers.

**Tyler Ernst:** Oh, yeah. Well, and especially as we look forward over the next couple of years, there's projected to be a decline overall in revenues to the state. So you take that already, and now you strip out a revenue source like these harvest revenues from the state forests. And I mean, it's just the state shooting itself in the foot.

**Chris Edwards:** Yeah, that's right. And I think I don't want to attribute attitudes to folks at the department or at the board that may not be accurate, but an observation in a charged political environment. It seems to me that the consideration has really been species habitat first. What's ideal for the species? And then let's make sure that we get adequate recreation opportunities. And then once we do all that, okay, maybe we can harvest some timber as well. And we'll call that a win-win-win. Whereas, I would say, why don't you approach it from a harvest perspective? Because we know that when we're harvesting, even as much as we can, we start from that and then say, okay, now within a harvest-heavy plan, how do we make sure that we build in habitat conservation? And how do we make sure that we enable or that we create recreational opportunities? The difference in those two approaches would be staggering.

**Tyler Ernst:** Yeah, absolutely. I mean, adopting that mindset of harvest first or how can we safeguard harvest levels and harvest sustainably while not jeopardizing these other aims? I would agree. I think that should be the paradigm that the state is using. And historically, it was. Well, and remember, too, that when we're talking about state forests, we're talking about 4% of the forested landscape. And so, even if you were to harvest more aggressively on state forests than we currently do, you're probably not going to be jeopardizing habitat, and especially in light of the draft Habitat Conservation Plan that is being presented to the services for private lands that came about as a result of the private forest accord. That plan covers mostly aquatics that would be covered under the state plan. And so if coho is what you're concerned about, well, hey, great. This Habitat Conservation Plan is going to protect habitat for coho. You can't just look at the state forest in a vacuum. You have to consider the state forest in light of everything else. And so not only do you have the vast majority of federal forests more or less being set aside for habitat preservation, but then you also have private forests that are being managed in a way to be consistent with protection of critical habitat for threatened and endangered species. So yeah, I mean, I just think no matter how you look at it, whether you look at it at what is the appropriate management paradigm, or whether you look at it just in the context of the entire scope of the forested landscape across Oregon, either way, I think you see 2.8% less of set-aside habitat of state forests probably isn't going to imperil these species.

**Chris Edwards:** Almost certainly wouldn't. Yeah, and the reason I brought up just how you approach it from the get-go is because 2.8% isn't much, and I would argue that maybe 2.8% didn't even start all the way from a harvest-heavy perspective. And in fairness to the department, I do wonder what would the implementation plan, how would that have modeled out when you actually start? And I don't know enough about the challenges they've been having with modeling. They seem to be long-standing. I want to give some of the humans that are working on this stuff the benefit of the doubt, although the politics around this and the decision-making frustrates the heck out of me on a regular basis. You know, there's a lot of good people trying to do what's right and respond to political pressures within the Department of Forestry and at the Board of Forestry.

**Tyler Ernst:** We're just sounding the bell on this. We're ringing the alarm that, hey, hold on, what you're on track to do is not a win-win-win, and oh, by the way, legislators, you're going to be dealing with this next legislative session when that department is in the red. I think some people kind of think of members of the industry as kind of always wearing tinfoil hats and seeing conspiracy around every corner. And I want to be clear, that's not what we think. I don't think that there was some huge nefarious plot at the State Forest Division to really sock it to the industry or anything like that. I think once you start down that path, part of it is just the law of inertia, right? I mean, it's difficult to stop a moving object more than it is to take a stationary object and push it in a new direction. And so that's part of what we're dealing with right now. But I do think that in light of these IPs and the outcry, the understandable outcry in response to these numbers, now is an opportunity for the department, for the Board of Forestry to pump the brakes and to reconsider the path that it is marching down at present.

**Chris Edwards:** So this could provide that needed wake up call to change the direction of that moving object. This is an opportunity for the department to say, hey, we got this wrong. We have moved so far towards prioritizing one of the three legs of that stool that we really have jeopardized the other two. And we need more balance to this plan.

**Tyler Ernst:** That's what's key. This is not inevitable. No, you're exactly right. It doesn't have to be that way. And even now, the Board held a special meeting on February 15th in response to this outcry to consider at that point, were they going to change course? They had decided back in November that they were going to continue with this HCP. They once again decided they were going to stay the course. But they even admitted at that meeting that it's not set in stone, and they can reconsider this down the road, maybe later this year after the Forest Management Plan is finalized. And there's a better understanding for what the balance of the acres that are going to be managed for timber harvest can produce. At that point, the Board could pump the brakes, and they could go back to the drawing board

and say, let's adopt a different HCP that is going to guarantee a more sustainable level of harvest that's more in line with the 10-year average. And we hope that they do that.

**Chris Edwards:** It doesn't feel like that's very likely.

**Tyler Ernst:** Yeah, I hate to be a pessimist, but the pessimist or cynic in me looks at what's happened to date and yeah, doesn't look hopeful. At the same time, I think you're seeing really a coming together of not only the industry, but also communities that are going to be impacted by this. And they are continuing without really any letting off or discouragement. They're continuing to preach this message and show the board how this is going to impact these communities and how it's going to impact the state. At the meeting that the Board of Forestry held on March 8th, there were hundreds of individuals that showed up from these timber dependent communities that are adjacent to these state forests, who came and told their stories and let the board know how this would affect them. You know, it's easy, we talked earlier in the podcast about the relative amount that these harvests equate to when you look at the entire pie of harvests in the state. But to these communities, this is a real impact. And so as long as they continue to present that message to the board, hopefully that message eventually gets through to enough of the Board of Forestry members that they are willing to say down the road, yes, let's reconsider and let's arrive at a solution here that actually does help these communities and actually maintains the health and viability of these state forests as well.

**Chris Edwards:** The groundswell from local communities and from the grassroots has been really remarkable to watch. And when you go back to previous, every step along the way, this Board of Forestry has been unified in their position of pushing forward the HCP, but you saw a split at that February 15th meeting.

**Tyler Ernst:** Yeah, that's right. And the current Board Chair, Jim Kelly, he is really jealous for that unity. He wants to maintain that unity at the Board. And I think rightly so. I think a Board Chair in his position should want them to as much as possible present a unified voice. And so that was telling. When you had that split, that 4-3 split at the February 15th meeting where three voted not to continue with the current HCP, and four voted to press forward, that really, I think, has the possibility of marking a watershed moment, where now in order to circle back to a point of unity, the Board is going to have to consider changing direction in some manner. And time will tell. I hope that Chair Kelly does again seek that unity and realize that in order to get there, something needs to change. They can't just keep going forward on the current course that they're on.

**Chris Edwards:** Yeah, I'm hopeful as well, but it does, in my mind, begs the question, if you weren't willing to pump the brakes with the materially new information that came forward from these implementation plans, what sort of new information would it take?

**Tyler Ernst:** Well, I think the answer to that question is the additional piece of information, the additional piece of the puzzle that's not yet in place, is what is this new forest management plan? And so the forest management plan encompasses all the state forest acres. What is this going to look like? Because right now, Chair Kelly in particular has been very vocal in saying, I want to see once we layer on top of this HCP, this new forest management plan, I want to see what the harvest levels look like then, because there's a possibility that they could get a little bit higher. Now, look, we do not believe, and we have it on fairly good authority, that even if they harvest at a kind of maximum sustained yield on the balance of the lands that aren't currently in habitat conservation areas, they're not going to get back up to 225 million board feet off of the state forest lands. But he wants to see it anyway. He wants to see where this will get them to. And then at that point, if our suspicions are confirmed, well, then Chair Kelly has an opportunity to say, okay, I see the whole picture now. All of the pieces are in place. Now let's rethink what we want to do with the HCP, because hey, guess what? We're not back up to that guaranteed level that we were being told we'd be at.

**Chris Edwards:** Yeah, that'll be an interesting test of leadership in the face of inertia at that point. It'll be interesting also to see in the meantime what's been negotiated away in a coho settlement.

**Tyler Ernst:** Yeah, it will be. And we're awaiting that publication of that settlement agreement. We expect it any day. In fact, by the time you're listening to this podcast, we might have a coho settlement, and we can see at that point the details of what the state agreed to. But what we know with almost 100% certainty is that coho levels are improving, that the coho very soon could be delisted. And since that was kind of the reason for being for this HCP in the first place, it will be really interesting to see how that factors into these discussions and into the different policy decisions that are made if the coho is delisted.

**Chris Edwards:** Yeah, and that coho recovery has happened under the Oregon Plan, under the existing, the prior Forest Practices Act, prior to the private forest accord.

**Tyler Ernst:** Oh, absolutely. I mean, you layer on top of all of this, the fact that private lands are now going to be managed differently on the heels of the private forest accord. And it really starts to strip away any of the justification for something as onerous as this state HCP. One of the concerns that we have as the legislature starts to sink its teeth into this is that there seems to be kind of a growing chorus for saying, well, hey, maybe we can

circumnavigate this entire issue and just get the current HCP that we have by just making the department and making these local communities less dependent on these harvest revenues from state lands. I would argue at the outset that that violates the principle that was really enshrined in those laws back from the 1940s about how these lands were supposed to be managed. But even assuming that those laws were agnostic to management, I do think it's folly to think that you could make up for these lost revenues, especially for counties, with direct payments. Again, we have a case study for how that looks with the federal forest. These communities that were dependent on revenues from federal timber sales, when they lost that revenue, the federal government tried to backfill those losses with direct payments. And what we've seen is that one, it's really, really difficult in an ever shifting political environment to continually reappropriate funds for direct payments like that. And so every two years, it's a battle to try to get funds appropriated. But what we've also seen is that even though they've continued, they have declined over time. I mean, one is just the political reality of you're dealing with a limited pot of money. But also they've decreased over time because the feds have looked at these communities and have said, well, hey, your enrollment numbers in your local schools are down, so you don't need as much money. Well, why is that? It's because the economic driver in those communities dried up, right? And so direct payments are, again, 11 jobs for every million board feet. You can't just replace that with direct payments. To think you can is utter folly. And we have, again, a case study right here at home in Oregon to show that that's true.

**Chris Edwards:** On that note, Tyler, I think that that's probably a good place to wrap up this particular conversation. But I've already thought of about three or four more conversations during the course of this one that state policymakers might find interesting. So we may get you back in here to continue this at another time.

**Tyler Ernst:** Well, thanks again for having me. I'm happy to continue the conversation anytime.

**Chris Edwards:** Great, thank you. I hope you enjoyed these two episodes to be useful to expand your understanding of the current state of play with Oregon's state forest. I'm confident we will return to this topic in a future episode. But in the meantime, we have more content on the way. So stay tuned. If there's something that you'd like us to cover on the Forestry Smart Policy podcast, be sure to drop us a note at [podcast@ofic.com](mailto:podcast@ofic.com).