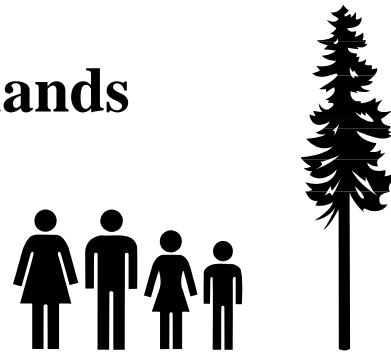


Committee for Family Forestlands

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June 30, 2011

John Blackwell, Chair
Oregon Board of Forestry
2600 State Street
Salem, OR 97310

Dear Chair Blackwell and Board Members:

The Committee for Family Forestlands has been intensely interested in the on-going work of the Ad Hoc Forest Cluster Working Group, which we have monitored via the participation of several CFF members in the Working Group. We want to explicitly thank all those that served on this Ad Hoc Committee and the ODF staff that supported the effort.

The CFF would like to go on record as being extremely concerned about the viability of the forest cluster industry sector because of the cluster's importance to family forest landowners. While individual members of the CFF do not agree with every element or recommendation, we endorse the importance of the work and underscore the urgency of these matters.

A vital forest cluster is critical to ensure that forestlands stay in forests. This is particularly true for the family forest landowners our Committee represents. By definition family forest land holdings are small, less than 5,000 acres, with well over a hundred thousand forest land owners owning from a few acres to several hundred in Oregon. Clearly these small landowners are dependent on the capacity, competency, and availability of those in the larger forest cluster for managing their lands and realizing the values associated with their lands. Regardless of the management objectives they hold for their lands, family forest landowners must be financially viable to succeed. A vital forest sector is key to this success now and in the future. The CFF has become particularly aware of how close to the edge many components of the forest sector are in Eastern Oregon and Southwest Oregon. These areas deserve special, immediate attention.

The CFF encourages the Board and the State Forester to actively attend to all of Oregon's forests. We encourage you to be engaged with the Governor's office on matters related to federal forestlands. Clearly in areas where federal ownership dominates the landscape, decisions related to the management of federal forests are critical to forest sector vitality. Because of size and proximity, family forests near federal lands are tightly related to and strongly affected by management of those federal lands. Family forestlands "ride along" on federal and other larger land

holdings in many matters like forest health and explicitly in maintaining sector capacity for forest management activities.

We would like to underscore several points as you review the Ad Hoc Forest Cluster Working Group report and its recommendations. The recommendation to focus on the “vital few” makes sense to us given the urgency in Eastern and Southwest Oregon. Second, the concerns around forest sector vitality need on-going attention. We strongly encourage the Department to work with others to provide leadership in this area. We also encourage you to broaden the range of perspectives engaged in any on-going working group. Clearly it is in the interests of Oregon broadly and family forest landowners narrowly to maintain a vital forest sector even as it evolves to meet new ecological, social and economic realities.

Finally, the members of the Committee for Family Forestlands would like to recognize David Morman and thank him for his service to Oregon, his incredible commitment to Oregon’s forests, and in particular his support of the CFF. We note that we have called on him and his Resource Planning staff repeatedly to help us address critical issues like biomass, federal forestlands, and sustainability. Once again on this occasion, we find ourselves thanking David for his “above the bar” support of the Forest Cluster Working Group.

Please do not hesitate to involve the CFF in future discussions on these matters. We are willing and eager to help on this issue of forest sector vitality because of its importance to family forestlands and their owners.

Sincerely,

Committee for Family Forestlands



Craig Shinn, Chair



Susan Watkins, Vice-Chair

cc: Oregon Board of Forestry Members
Doug Decker, State Forester
Peter Daugherty, Acting Private Forests Division Chief

The Committee for Family Forestlands is a statutory committee appointed by the Board of Forestry to provide advice and recommendations regarding family forests and includes family forestland owners from different areas of the state, environmental organization and forest industry representatives, a citizen-at-large and ex-officio members representing the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), Extension Service, Oregon Forest Resources Institute, the Oregon Small Woodlot Association and logging or forestry consulting interests.