


From: DECKER, Doug S  
To:  ALL FORESTRY  
Cc: John Blackwell; Sybil Ackerman (sybil@sybilackerman.com); Peter Hayes; Cal Mukumoto; Jennifer K. Phillippi; Gary Springer; Sww3353@aol.com  
Subject: ODF Budget Update  
Sent: Fri 06/03/2011 4:42 PM

Hello –

Our budget for the 2011-2013 biennium passed an important milestone this morning, with unanimous approval by the Legislature's joint Ways and Means Committee. The budget provides a sound foundation for our operations in the coming biennium, and will help us strengthen and develop a new vision for our Private Forests program. Here's a look at the major features of the budget as approved by the committee:

### **Re-evaluating and Rebuilding in Private Forests**

There is significant good news here. The budget adds about 28 full-time equivalent positions for enforcement of the Forest Practices Act and related monitoring, and for forest health work. This increase restores most of the reductions of the past few years, returning staffing in the program approximately to 2007-2009 levels. At the same time, we've recognized that our business model for administering the Act is in need of a good re-look and modernization, something we have been discussing with our stakeholders and with legislators for some months.

The budget recognizes this need, and instructs us to contract with outside firms to:

1. Conduct monitoring to determine rates of compliance with the Act – important information that we have not had resources to gather in recent years. The budget directs us to report the findings to the Ways and Means Committee during the 2013 legislative session.
2. Recommend cost savings and efficiencies in our administration of the Act. We'll work with other agencies and with stakeholders to develop recommendations, and will submit those to the Legislature in mid-2012.

We'll be thinking and acting carefully as we consider the pace and extent of restoring program resources: key aspects of the work may come soon, and other components may come a bit later as we consider efficiencies and effectiveness.

The take home message for all of us and our stakeholders is that the budget reflects a recognition of the importance of robust Forest Practices Act services. And it enables us to explore much-needed technology improvements and other measures that will increase our efficiency and effectiveness.

These essential steps will help us, with our stakeholders, to launch a broader look at our Private Forests program. Our intent is not simply to restore the program as it has existed in the past, but to identify and provide the range of services that's best suited to keeping forests healthy and working in the 21st century.

### **Maintaining services and cost-sharing in Fire Protection**

The budget continues the longstanding 50-50 sharing of basic fire protection costs between landowners and the state's General Fund. The funding system for fighting large fires also remains the same: Landowners and the state split the cost of an insurance policy to cover the costs of fighting these fires. Landowners pay the first portion of the policy's deductible, and the General Fund is responsible for the remainder.

Money is also set aside, at current service levels, for the Legislature's Emergency Board to allocate to us as needed to supplement or pre-position firefighting resources when and where fire danger is highest.

**Other elements**

The budget provides ongoing authority to the State Forests program for self-funding through timber sale revenue.

It also includes technical changes and other provisions, including eliminating unused, vacant positions, and re-aligning funding for agency-wide administrative services, in proportion to each program's use of those services.

After today's action in Ways and Means, our budget goes next to the full House and Senate, and then to the Governor for his signature.

Our new budget will go into effect July 1. As we implement these new resources, we'll also be taking into consideration the context of current vacancies, one-time federal stimulus funding that will be ending soon, and other factors. We're committed to doing this as quickly as we can, and I'll keep you posted as the process moves forward.

At the end of this week, this is good news that we can all feel good about. Particularly during such difficult economic times for all Oregonians and state services, it's gratifying to see the value of our work acknowledged. This is a great tribute to your skill and dedication, and to the support of our stakeholders.

On that note, have a safe and enjoyable weekend!

Best,

Doug

---

**Doug Decker, Oregon State Forester**

Director, Oregon Department of Forestry

Office: 503-945-7211

Mobile: 503-701-0236

Oregon Department of Forestry

2600 State Street, Salem OR 97301

<http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/>

