



Forest meets subdivision in rural Clackamas County

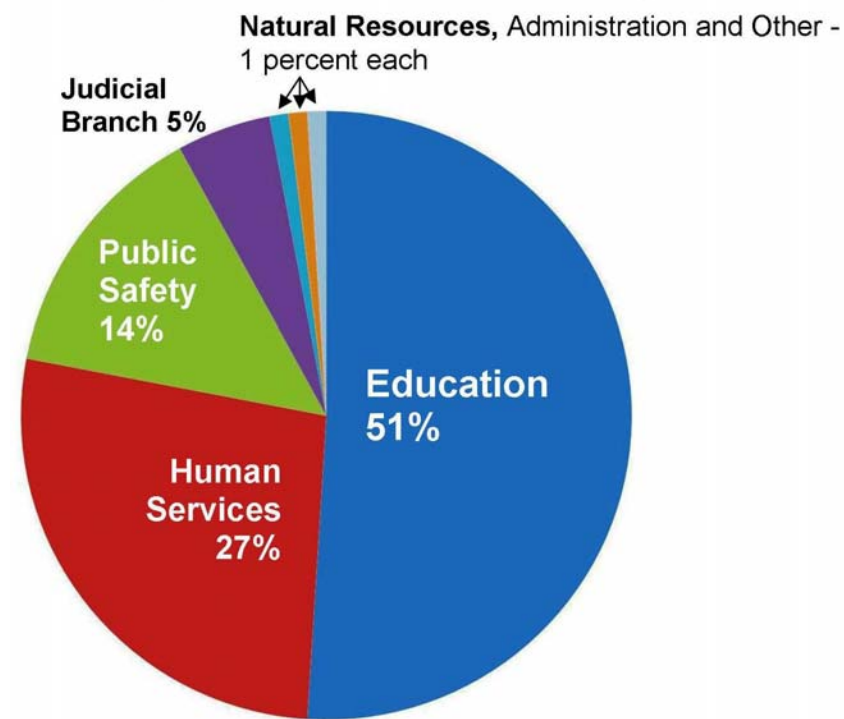
## Forests face significant challenges, at a time when funds for their protection are declining

### Threats to forests include:

- The challenging economics of managing private forests – including difficult timber markets and rising fire protection costs – create pressure to sell forests for other uses.
- Fragmentation and development of forestland means permanent loss of forest benefits.
- Multiple challenges on federal lands (60 percent of Oregon’s forests), including extensive need for thinning, fuel reduction and other forest health projects.
- Rising fire danger, due to fuels buildup, climate trends, and increased residential development in forested areas.

The economic output of Oregon's natural resource industries amounts to over \$55 billion – **37% of the state's annual domestic product**. But natural resource agencies' proportion of General Fund has dropped in recent biennia to 1%.

### 2011-13 Governor's Balanced Budget (\$ 13.8 billion General Fund)



### For more information:

ODF Agency Affairs  
(503) 945-7200  
[Information@odf.state.or.us](mailto:Information@odf.state.or.us)

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BACKGROUNDER

# Oregon Department of Forestry

*How public investment helps protect Oregon's forests*

*Healthy, working forests for a healthy, working Oregon*



*Fire protection is ODF's top priority*

**Protecting and enhancing Oregon's forest resources brings abundant returns.**

### Healthy, working forests are essential to Oregon's well-being.

Forest values are at risk without adequate investment in fire protection and enforcement of natural resource protection laws. The Governor's Balanced Budget for ODF supports these functions with a mix of public and forest landowner dollars.

### Key forest benefits:

**Jobs.** About 57,000 Oregonians work in the forest industry - one of Oregon's top traded sectors (industries producing income from goods or services sold out of state).

**Revenue for public services.** Forest businesses and jobs help provide tax revenue for schools and other vital local government services.

**Renewable energy.** Woody biomass from mills, logging and much-needed forest thinning can fuel renewable energy and provide economic opportunity, particularly in rural Oregon.

**Clean water.** Forests produce cleaner water than any other land use, supplying drinking water for more than 2.8 million Oregonians, 75 percent of our state's population.

**Wildlife habitat, recreation, clean air and more.** These attributes contribute to a healthy environment and to Oregon's appeal to tourists and new residents and businesses.





## Why General Fund is critical to keeping forests healthy and working

*ODF responds to an average of more than 1,000 wildfires each year*

### Fire protection – for public safety and natural resources:

- Oregon’s biggest fire department, ODF works with landowners and other agencies to protect 16 million acres of mostly private forestland, a \$60 billion asset. About 20 percent of these lands are in the wildland-urban interface, where the forest is also someone’s home.
- Most fires are put out while small. The few that grow large damage property and resources, and impose multi-million dollar costs and risks on landowners and the General Fund.

### An effective, consistent, credible system for protecting natural resources in working forests:

- Field foresters enforce Oregon’s landmark Forest Practices Act, which requires post-harvest reforestation and protection of water, wildlife habitat and other forest resources.

**Fire protection and natural resource law enforcement keep forests healthy, protect public safety, and help provide stability for an important sector of Oregon’s economy.**

## Fire protection is a sound investment

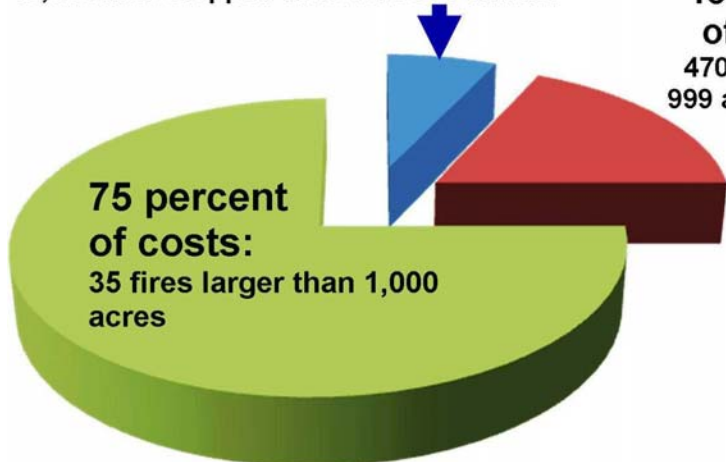
**Shared investment by landowners and General Fund in basic fire protection enables ODF to attack fires quickly and keep them small, avoiding larger costs**

### 7 percent of costs:

10,230 fires stopped at 10 acres or smaller

### 18 percent of costs:

470 fires 11 to 999 acres in size



Total fire suppression costs compared to fire size, 2001-2010

ODF is nationally recognized as a leader in wildland fire suppression services.

The key: Aggressive response keeps more than 90% of fires small on ODF-protected lands.

## General Fund reductions have reduced forest protections



*ODF staff measuring water quality*

**Effective resource protection assures Oregonians that forests are managed soundly, and provides stable regulations for the forest industry.**

**General Fund in ODF is focused on fire protection and on enforcement of forest resource protection laws on private land. Budget cuts have reduced capacity to enforce laws during harvest and other operations.**

- Today, **30** field foresters are assigned to enforce the Forest Practices Act on 10.7 million acres of private land. **Each is responsible for more than 530 operations a year – a workload that does not provide for effective monitoring and resource protection.**
- An emphasis on complaint response is replacing a more proactive approach based on prevention and landowner consultation.

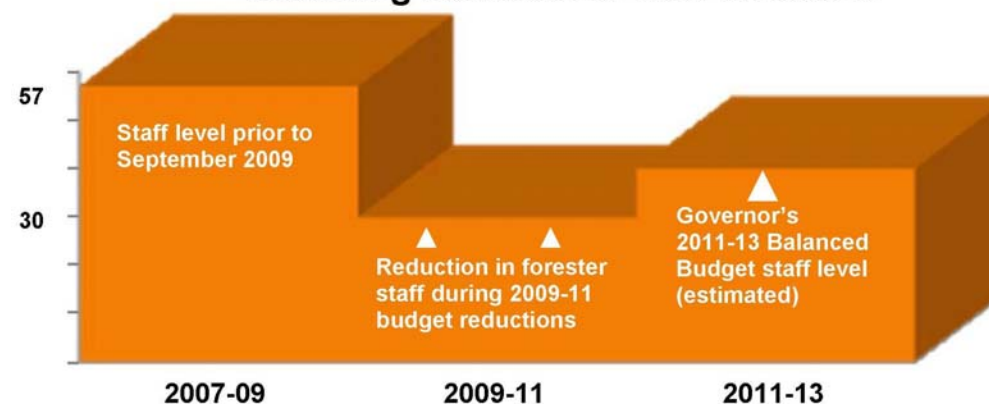
- Family forestland owners often have limited forestry experience and look to ODF for help in compliance, protecting resources and improving forest stewardship.
- Field foresters help landowners create healthy, working forests where fragmentation or conversion to other uses are limited – a landscape that in turn reduces fire danger and cost.
- Reduction in field foresters – who are also experienced fire managers – means lost fire protection capacity.

Reduced public investment also means:

Less research and monitoring, which are essential to effective protection of natural resources.

Lost opportunity for leadership in helping Oregon address biomass use, federal forest policy, and other key challenges.

## Declining numbers of field foresters



The Governor’s Balanced Budget proposal includes funds to restore an estimated **10 stewardship forester positions** and up to 2 technical specialists, rebuilding some program capacity lost during the 2007-2009 budget reductions