

Oregon Board of Forestry Meeting

September 7, 2023

How to Provide Public Comments on the Habitat Conservation Plan

Oregon Board of Forestry Hybrid Meeting – September 7, 2023

Meeting Location: Salem - ODF Headquarters, Tillamook Room - 2600 State St, Salem, OR. [Map](#)

To provide comments: To sign up, click on this link to register. Provide your name, email address, phone number. Specify that you would like provide comment on September 7 for agenda Item #8, public comment.

<https://signup.com/go/JtVjNYe>

Once you have signed up, you will receive an email with instructions. If you sign up for virtual testimony, you will also receive an email with the link and instructions prior to the meeting. If the September 7th registration is full, try signing up for September 6th, agenda item #1, public comment.

If you are experiencing technical issues or require accommodations, contact the Board Administrator, hilary.olivos-rood@odf.oregon.gov.

Meeting Agenda: Board of Forestry meeting agenda and packet available here: [Agenda and Board packet](#)

Public Comment Guide for the Board of Forestry Meeting:

Please adapt these talking points to focus on key points most relevant to your interests and experience.

- **Aim for 2 minutes** for your verbal comments (that's less than 300 words—it goes quickly!).
- **Intro:** Begin by saying, “Chair Kelly and members of the Board, for the record my name is _____. (Give organizational affiliation, if any) **I’m commenting today in opposition to the proposed resolution to weaken the Habitat Conservation Plan...**”

- **Make it personal.** Why do you care about this issue? Do you live in the area of a state forest? Have you spent time in Oregon's state forests? How does this affect your family, community?
- **Ask the Board to support a strong HCP and reject efforts to weaken it.** Make sure that you ask the Board to support a strong Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) that is grounded in science. Ask the Board to oppose the Chair's resolution to open up the HCP and clearcut thousands of acres within proposed Habitat Conservation Areas (HCAs). The proposed resolution would reduce habitat for endangered fish and wildlife, result in thousands of acres of industrial scale clearcuts on state forests, and cause unnecessary delays in finalizing the HCP.
- Remind the Board that state law requires them to make their decisions based on the **best available science**. The proposed changes of the HCP are not supported by science. Instead, they are based on political pressure.
- **State forests have already been over-harvested.** That's why we need a strong HCP. Opening up the HCP to create more clearcuts on state forests is risky. It would cause more delays and would undermine the entire HCP, which must still be approved by federal agencies.
- **There is a large backlog of timber sales.** The Board and staff have acknowledged that there is a large backlog of timber sales already. The staff is working on new timber harvest estimates that will be presented later this year. There should be ample timber sale revenue for the state forest program for the next few years.
- To ensure the success of the HCP, all decisions must apply the **best available science, maintain ample habitat for threatened salmon and wildlife, and buffer against the effects of climate change**. There are no assurances that the Chair's resolution would do this, and we urge the Board of Forestry to reject it.
- Instead, please **support HCP Alternative 3**, which provides better protections for salmon habitat by preventing logging along tributary streams and around landslide-prone areas. There is a strong scientific basis for these protections, and they would not result in further delays for the HCP.
- Thank the Board for considering your comments.

Additional Points to Include in Your Testimony:

Ask the Board to support passage of the State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan Alternative 3.

- Alternative 3 is a better path for fish and wildlife species, their habitat, and broad conservation values on state-managed public forests to benefit current and future generations of Oregonians. While even greater protections are needed, HCP

Alternative 3 offers necessary, long-term protections for fish and wildlife in the face of climate change.

- HCP Alternative 3 establishes dedicated stream and forest conservation areas in the Tillamook, Clatsop and other state forests in western Oregon. It improves conservation protections for logging on steep slopes and to address the impacts of logging roads.
- Approving a strong HCP not only brings more certainty to habitat conservation, it also enhances recreation, economic diversity, and ongoing timber production.
- In the Linn County court decision, the courts affirmed the state's mandate to manage state forests for the greatest permanent value for all Oregonians. This includes managing for conservation values. It's time to support a strong Habitat Conservation Plan that meets this standard.
- Oregonians overwhelmingly support [prioritizing fish and wildlife habitat, clean water, and recreation on state lands](#). A strong HCP protects Oregon's public lands legacy.

Healthy state forest lands mean healthy local economies and communities

- More than 500,000 people in Northwest Oregon get their drinking water from streams and rivers that flow out of state forest land.
- State forests provide substantial economic benefits by supporting fish and wildlife habitat, drinking water, recreation, carbon sequestration and climate stabilization.
- State forests on the North Coast anchor a \$550 million a year tourism and recreation economy in the region that contributes over \$50 million a year in tax revenues to local communities.
- The HCP would provide 28% more timber and jobs than the "No Action" alternative (i.e., without adopting the HCP). It would provide more revenue for local services while improving protection of habitat for salmon and wildlife.

Climate – manage conservation areas for carbon as well

- Conservation Areas, both Habitat Conservation Areas (HCAs) and Riparian Conservation Areas (RCAs), should be co-managed for the protection and recovery of threatened and endangered species and as carbon reserves. This will help support implementing the Climate Change and Forest Carbon Plan (CCCP) adopted by the Board of Forestry in 2021.

Public lands belong to all Oregonians

- Public lands must be managed for the public good of all Oregonians, for current and future generations.
- The fish, wildlife, rivers and forests that exist in our state lands belong to, and are the responsibility of, all Oregonians.
- We have an obligation to plan for the protection of watersheds, soils and climate now and for future generations.

- Oregonians overwhelmingly support [prioritizing fish and wildlife habitat, clean water, and recreation on state lands](#).

HCP is necessary to protect, preserve, and restore habitat

- Tillamook, Clatsop and other state forests have been overcut and underprotected for a generation, following long recovery after the Tillamook Burn.
- Clearcut timber harvest is the greatest limiting factor to the survival of covered threatened and endangered species over which we have direct control.
- A strong HCP based on Alternative 3 is essential and sets the floor of what we should be doing to ensure the survival of salmon and other endangered species.
- A permit term of 50 years (as opposed to the proposed 70-year term) can and should more sharply focus attention on adaptive management efforts to improve opportunities for survival of covered species.