

April 12, 2014

Oregon Board of Forestry
Salem, Oregon

I am a small woodland owner living on property that has been in the family for 63 years. My sister and I currently manage 220 acres of timberland which is divided in 2 portions by the Winchuck River in Curry County, Oregon. My family has been a member of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association for more than 25 years.

This property is rich in water resources with seven small fish bearing streams in addition to the river. One of those streams is dry except in heavy rain but is classified as a fish bearing stream because the outlet provides protection for fish as they move up the Winchuck River. Currently 13% of the property is set aside in riparian areas. A larger riparian area would be devastating to our ability to make a living from the property.

Approximately 50% of the shade trees along the small streams on this particular property are Oregon Myrtle, a tree that is not even considered when calculating basal area in the riparian area.

I believe that more time should be taken to evaluate whether changes in the riparian area are needed. Part of the evaluation should be a review of the state's Cold Water Criteria. Many natural occurrences such as wind storms take down trees along the streams and the fish adapt to those openings.

My family shares this land with many animals; song birds, elk, bear, beavers, fish, spotted owls and bald eagles, and we benefit from our association. We retain the dense shade from the old growth redwoods and we open the woods for the undergrowth that provides habitat for the birds. Much of the land around me has been clear cut in my lifetime, often down to the river bank and I am sure that warmed the streams. As a child, the fish nibbled my toes when I swam in the river and in spite of all the humans have done to the earth; the fish continue to nibble my toes when I stand in that same cold water.

I realize that you must base your decisions on science but I believe that broader research would show that minor changes in forest stream temperature do not have a negative impact on fish habitat.

Forest landowners who follow the Forest Practice Laws already make a large financial contribution to protect riparian areas. Please consider the cost and the benefit as you make your decisions. The forest landowners I know are doing their best to be good stewards of the land.

Thank you,
Cilde Grover