

March 14, 2013

Honorable Ron Wyden
U.S. Senate
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Wyden:

As forest managers and members of the Forest Guild, we believe strongly in the importance of stewardship that maintains the ecological integrity of our forests while supporting local community social and economic goals. Working forests in Oregon provide an economic driver for rural communities, conserve clean water and protect wildlife and fisheries habitat prized by citizens.

For that reason, we **thank you for sponsoring S.338 and for your continued support for the Land and Water Conservation Fund's Forest Legacy Program**—which is critical to our economy, and way of life.

As federal forest management in the Northwest has shifted toward a greater emphasis on non-timber resources, the job of providing forest products now rests increasingly with private landowners. A recent study by the National Alliance of Forest Owners concluded that every 1,000 acres of private, working forest creates on average \$270,000 in annual payroll and \$733,000 in annual sales.

We work with family forest landowners in the Northwest who manage their forests to a high standard of stewardship with an emphasis on management practices that protect habitat and water quality values. Working forest conservation easements, including those funded by the Land and Water Conservation Fund's Forest Legacy Program, are one of the most effective ways to secure this legacy of responsible forest stewardship while serving as an economic driver and job creator in Northwest communities.

Funded by fees from offshore oil and gas drilling, the Land and Water Conservation Fund's Forest Legacy program is a common-sense approach to conservation. The program keeps private lands as working forests, enabling conservation and economic values to continue from generation to generation. Regrettably, funds dedicated to the Land and Water Conservation Fund are routinely diverted to other purposes, affecting the ability of landowners and managers from practice long-term, responsible forest stewardship.

As members of the Forest Guild, we are committed to forest management that provides for the needs of today while safeguarding the ecological and economic integrity of our forests for future generations. This is why **we ask that you support full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Forest Legacy Program**. Your leadership is needed to ensure that these non-taxpayer-dollars are spent as Congress intended: on our local forests and outdoor resources. Our rural communities and economies depend on it.

Sincerely,

Michael Ahr, Portland, OR
Marc D. Barnes, Corvallis, OR
Jeff Bennett, Salem, OR
Zane Cornett, Eugene, OR
Brent Davies, Portland, OR
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