

Testimony for SB 430

Presented to the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee

By Guido Rahr, Chair, Tillamook Rainforest Coalition

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My name is Guido Rahr; I am the Chair of the Tillamook Rainforest Coalition.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today about SB 430, a bill to balance natural resource development with the conservation of fish, wildlife and clean water in the Tillamook and Clatsop State Forest in Northwest Oregon.

The Tillamook Rainforest Coalition

The Tillamook Rainforest Coalition is fifty small business, conservation and fishing organizations, representing over 100,000 Oregonians – who are concerned about the future of the Tillamook and Clatsop State Forests in NW Oregon. This 5000-acre forest looks from the air like a giant green oasis. Some of Oregon's most famous wild salmon rivers – the Trask, Wilson, Kilchis and Nehalem – flow from this forest. It encompasses most of the land west of Portland, and is home to abundant fish and wildlife, spectacular range of recreational opportunities, and clean water that hundred of thousand of residents of Washington County depend on.

The State refuses to protect any watersheds on the Tillamook and Clatsop Forest from logging and road building

The Oregon Board of Forestry recently approved a plan that will subject over 85% of the forest to logging and road building. The harvest will climb from 90 MBF to over 190 MBF a year. Despite 10 years of requests from dozens of organizations and thousands for citizens, the ODF has refused to protect any watersheds from logging and road building and not a single reserve has been created for fish and wildlife.

The impacts of logging and road building throughout the entire forest could be tremendous: increased slides, sedimentation of spawning gravel, and flooding in Tillamook Basin.

Our proposal

The proposals for the Tillamook and Clatsop State Forest have ranged from creating a new state park to managing as individual tree farm. We have brought a wide range of groups together to advance a balanced approach: 50% of the forest dedicated to the ODF's structure based management program and 50% managed primarily for clean water, fish, wildlife and recreation. In these areas logging would be permitted over the next 20 years for thinning. After that the land will be protected.

This is not an anti-logging proposal. We are actually proposing to increase harvests 26%, from the ten-year average of 89MBF to 112 MBF a year. In addition, our goal is to have no negative impacts on county budgets and state school funding.

Why 50%? It's balanced, the science supports it and it preserves the economic health of the communities of NW Oregon.

This plan makes sense for Oregon. Our state is doubling its population every 50 years. There are very few chances left to protect something so beautiful literally in the back yard of Oregon's largest city. The fastest growing sectors of the economy in NW Oregon are retirement and tourism. Visualize where our state is going and what we want the future to look like. I hope you will agree that protecting the flow of timber revenues and the clear cold rivers and forests of the Tillamook makes sense.

Thank your for the chance to describe this legislation, and I would now like to introduce our panel: