

BEFORE THE BOARD OF FORESTRY

*Statement of Greg Haller, Conservation Director Pacific Rivers Council on Agenda Item
7: Riparian Rule Analysis
June 3, 2015*

My name is Greg Haller and I am the Conservation Director for Pacific Rivers Council, a regional conservation organization dedicated to protecting and restoring rivers and their watersheds. To achieve this goal in Oregon, the regulatory baseline established by the Oregon Forests Practices Act must be strengthened significantly.

I. Recommendations

With over a decade of analysis and deliberation by the Department of Forestry and the Board, the Board of Forestry has the necessary information to recommend increased riparian protections on small and medium fish bearing streams in western Oregon that meets the Protecting Coldwater Criterion of Oregon's stream temperature standard. Not only does RipStream analysis demonstrate the need for increased buffers on fish bearing streams, its findings are sufficient to expand similar protections for non-fish bearing streams.

Pacific Rivers Council recommends:

- (1) The Board proposes a 100-foot no-cut riparian management area for all small and medium fish streams, not just those bearing salmon, steelhead or bull trout
- (2) Updating rules for small, non-fish bearing streams within 12 months.
- (3) Updating rules for all streams in eastern Oregon within 12 months.

We are not alone in making these recommendations. I have submitted for the record a petition, signed by nearly 1,200 Oregonians calling for the implementation of these recommendations.

It is long past time for Oregon to reform its forest practices on private industrial timberlands to protect the clean water commons that so many Oregonians and fish and wildlife rely on. The inability of the legislature to pass even modest reforms to rules governing the aerial application of pesticides was unconscionable and further highlights the extent to which industrial timber owners have hijacked the democratic process to pad their bottom lines at the expense of clean water, robust fish runs and human health. Oregonians insist rules governing forest practices be at least as protective, if not more so, as forest practices in neighboring states. Implementing these recommendations will restore some faith that Oregon's decision-makers will rely on sound science to implement meaningful change to protect our clean water commons.