



Oregon Board of Forestry Meeting

July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to the very important riparian rule revision before the board today.

My name is Dean Finnerty and I represent the 3,000 members of Trout Unlimited in Oregon.

Trout Unlimited is heavily engaged in forestry collaborative efforts in many states, including this one.

We feel very strongly that the collaborative effort leads to the best use of our forests and the ecosystems they support, including our cold water fisheries.

It's a simple fact that it's easier and much less expensive to "protect" what we have, than try to repair what's been damaged. Trout Unlimited volunteers have worked hundreds of hours here in Oregon conducting restoration work. Planting streamside trees to provide shade, stabilize banks, and prevent erosion. Increasing buffers is a straightforward way to "restore" these streams. Increased buffers improve shade, recruit large woody debris and improve over-all health of our streams and the habitat that supports fish. Why would we, as Oregonians continue a pattern of damaging our cold water fisheries that are so important economically and socially to all of our citizens.

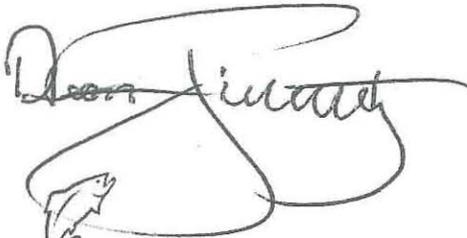
This past week, ODFW had to enact an "emergency closure" regulation that prohibits anglers from fishing after two p.m. This regulation is intended to protect our salmon, trout and steelhead populations, suffering due to increased water temperatures during this recent drought and warming trend.

I live, work and play on Oregon's famed Umpqua river near Elkton, Oregon. The past few days I've found numerous adult spring Chinook salmon and native summer steelhead floating dead on the surface. These salmon and steelhead were destined for the cooler waters of the North Umpqua river, but due to the 83 degree water temperature in the mainstem Umpqua, they were unable to survive this fatally warm water. In recent years, large timber harvest from non-federally managed timber lands in several Umpqua basin drainages have resulted in summer time water temperature increases adding to this warming trend. Weatherly Creek, Lutzinger Creek, Elk Creek and Paradise Creek are just a few of the streams where warmer tributary water temps are adding to this problem.

We strongly encourage the board to enact regulatory changes to increase riparian buffers along our streams to meet coldwater standards. These rule changes should NOT be voluntary.

We believe the board has the duty and obligation to all Oregonians to follow the obvious science and protect our rivers and streams from source point pollution in the form of increasing water temperatures. We believe that increasing riparian "no-touch" buffers to 110 feet on each side of the stream is the best way to achieve the goal of protecting water quality for salmon, steelhead and Bull trout.

Thank you for your time and consideration to this important public process.

  
  
**TROUT  
UNLIMITED**

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