

NEWS RELEASE

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Governor Kitzhaber Calls for Congressional Action on O&C Lands

(Salem, OR) — Governor Kitzhaber today called for Congressional action to improve the financial stability of Oregon counties, ensure adequate sources of timber to support mills and jobs and meet conservation goals for land and water protection. In a letter to Oregon's Congressional Delegation, Governor Kitzhaber reported on the work of his O&C Lands Panel and outlined components of a solution for hard-hit counties.

The Governor brought together a diverse group of 14 county officials, forest product industry representatives and conservation leaders that spent three months developing a series of forest management options. The panel seeks to continue its work with the Oregon delegation to resolve the longstanding O&C issue.

“I applaud the panel for establishing a foundation of understanding and trust between county officials, forest product industry representatives and conservation leaders that has eluded O&C discussions for decades,” said Governor Kitzhaber. “I believe a solution can and should be passed into law that achieves significant economic and environmental benefits for Oregonians.”

The O&C Lands Panel analyzed a range of land management options utilizing timber supply and projections modeling as well as ecological effects modeling. The results propose creative new ways to optimize public values tied to O&C land management.

In his letter to the Oregon delegation, Governor Kitzhaber highlighted several important components of an O&C solution that are supported by the analysis:

- Stable and predictable timber sale levels above current harvest levels can be achieved with minimal impact to old-growth and aquatic ecosystems;
- Timber harvest and/or land disposition revenues can significantly improve the financial stability of O&C counties;

- There are approximately 150,000 acres of special places deserving of Wilderness designation or some other form of legislative protection. Additional acres should be considered for Wild and Scenic River designation;
 - Voluntary, non-regulatory private land conservation strategies can play an important role in advancing conservation values, timber supply and fire management; and
 - The O&C Act should be amended to create more certainty in producing environmental and economic outcomes.
- Oregon and California (O&C) lands are unique to Oregon. The 2.6 million acres of forests across 18 counties are a compilation of land ownerships resulting from various Congressional actions dating to the Oregon and California Railroad Act of 1866. For more detail:

Link to O&C Lands Report:

<http://oregon.gov/gov/GNRO/docs/OCLandsReport.pdf>

Link to Governor's letter:

<http://www.oregon.gov/gov/GNRO/docs/OCDelegationLetter.pdf>

Link to Panel Perspectives:

<http://www.oregon.gov/gov/GNRO/docs/OCPanelPerspectives.pdf>

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