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To: Oregon State Land Board
From: Board of Oregon Websites and Watersheds Project, Inc.
RE: Current Elliott State Forest “Decoupling” Status
Date: December 18, 2018

To the Members of Oregon State Land Board:

Oregon Websites and Watersheds Project, Inc. (ORWW), is a nonprofit 501 c(3) corporation based in Philomath that has continuously created and maintained a series of online educational websites for more than 20 years – likely making us the longest continuously operating educational website ever. Since beginning in December 1996, our Mission Statement has been:

Oregon Websites and Watersheds Project, Inc. shows students how to use Internet communications and scientific methodology to help manage Oregon's natural and cultural resources. Students are encouraged to use computer technology, historical documentation, scientific reasoning, community outreach, environmental enhancement projects, and effective long-term monitoring strategies to help make decisions which affect Oregon's quality of life.

On behalf of myself and the other ORWW Board Members, Russ Sapp (President) and Wayne Giesy (Treasurer), we would like to make the following four statements regarding the October 2018 Portland State University (PSU) *Community Consensus Assessment Report*, “Elliott State Forest: Next Step Considerations for Decoupling from Oregon’s Common School Fund.”

[First, please note that we think this report was very well written and considered and, despite our continued opposition to the decoupling process, believe there is strong value in completing the third phase “advisory committee” of this agreement for informational purposes; whether a decision is ultimately made to “decouple” or not.]

1. ORWW does not support the proposed decoupling of the Elliott State Forest (“the Elliott”) from the statutory obligation and responsibility of the State Land Board to manage the Elliott for the advantage of Oregon schoolchildren and the Common School Fund. We believe there is a false and unnecessary urgency to adopt this “solution” to effectively and legally manage the Elliott; that the 2016 appraisal of the Elliott for \$220 million grossly underestimates its true timber and land value, and doesn’t adequately consider potential research, education, and recreational values; and that this process – for those two reasons alone – is greatly unfair to Oregon school children, to the Common School Fund, to Oregon taxpayers, and to residents and businesses of Coos and Douglas counties.

2. “Elliott State Educational Forest.” Instead of “decoupling” the State Land Board from its fiscal and legal responsibilities we continue to support adoption of the proposed self-funding, 20-year “Giesy Plan Alternative” for the management of the Elliott at this time. This proposal was first formally presented to the Land Board at the February 14, 2017 meeting and provided with greater detail at the May 9, 2017 meeting. This proposal has also been discussed in detail in a series of public meetings, magazine articles, radio interviews, and newspaper editorials:

http://www.orww.org/Elliott_Forest/Research/Giesy_Plan

The basic design of the Giesy Plan proposal is to first divide the Elliott State Forest into 18 to 24 subbasins, at an average size approaching 4,000 acres. Subbasins would be further separated into contiguous riparian areas containing fish bearing streams and associated floodplains, roadways, culverts, and bridges -- which would be managed separately from the upland forest, perhaps in collaboration with local Indian Tribes. One-half of the subbasins, about 40,000 acres, would be managed entirely for “old-growth habitat,” while the other subbasins would be systematically clearcut and reforested at the historical rate of 50 million board feet per year for 20 years. During this time careful records would be kept of nesting and foraging activities of local wildlife populations, carbon sequestration changes, and economic benefits to the Common School Fund and to local communities, and all resulting information would be made publicly available online.

Old-growth Habitat. Would be actively managed to maintain current access roads and viability of older trees. Salvage logging, prescribed fires on culturally significant meadows and berry patches, and considered reforestation would be allowed. Focus would be on carbon sequestration research, wildlife populations, education, and recreational opportunities.

Active Management. These lands would be systematically clearcut on a subbasin basis to provide a direct contrast to the old-growth habitat subbasins, and then carefully reforested. These would be the principal source of the 50 million feet of harvest, supplementing any salvage logging, thinnings, or other prescribed harvest on old-growth and riparian reserves. Reforestation planning, plan implementation, and maintenance would be performed in collaboration with Oregon students and local Tribes and businesses, and based on historical survey patterns, comprehensive cultural resource inventories, and development of native, non-timber resources as meadows, prairies, trails, myrtle groves, cedar stands, etc.

Riparian Zones. These would be defined as a contiguous polygon including all fish bearing streams in the Elliott, and the streamside roads, trails, bridges, and culverts that adjoin them. Management would be in cooperation with local Indian Tribes and public schools.

In this way the Giesy Plan Alternative for managing the Elliott for 20 years would:

- 1) Provide a scientific demonstration as to how to help end the “forest wars” of the past 30 years in order to better manage our federal forest lands for local and wildlife benefits;
- 2) Produce more than 430 full-time local jobs in Coos and Douglas Counties;
- 3) Produce an estimated \$460+ million for the Oregon School Fund over 20 years;

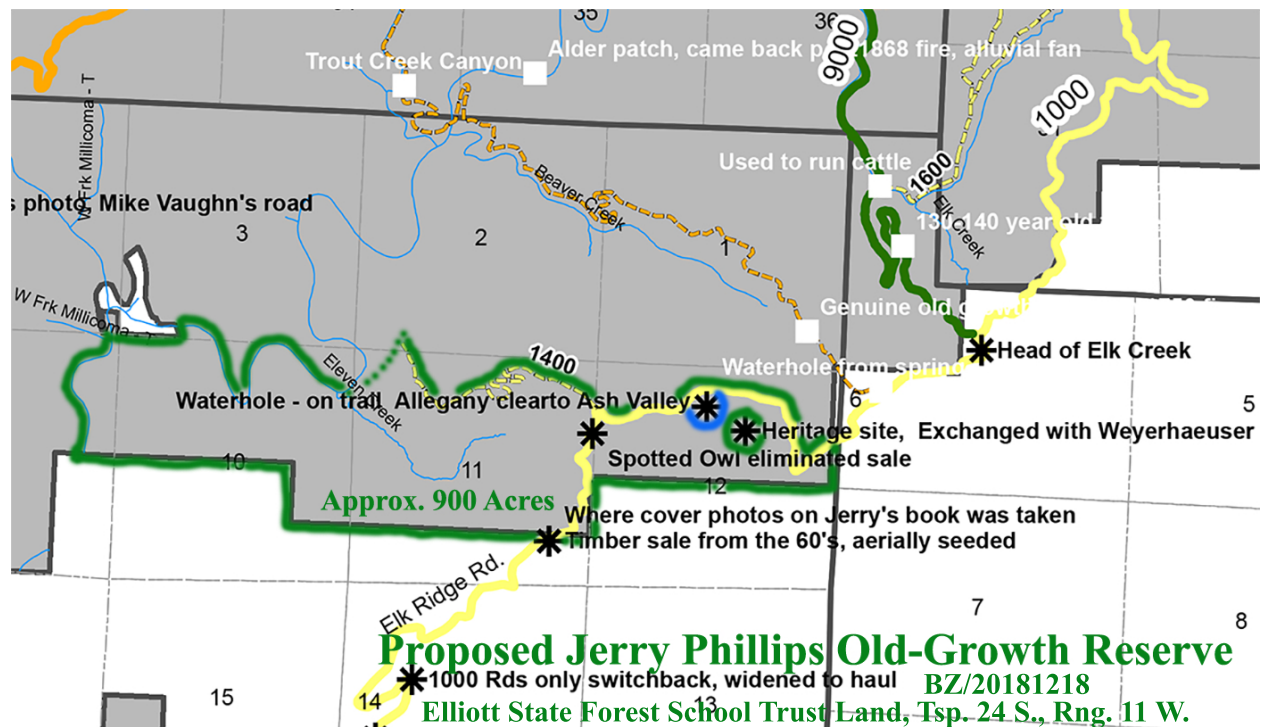
4) Retain (and actively study) more than 40,000 acres of “old-growth habitat” for native animal species;

5) Provide an excellent scientific basis for researching nesting and foraging habitat for marbled murrelets and spotted owls; carbon sequestration measures for differing forest management approaches; and effects of active management on native coho and lamprey populations.

These results would be of direct benefit to Oregon schools, teachers, and students; to western US forest and wildlife managers; to local timber producing communities; and to native wildlife.

3. “Jerry Phillips Old-Growth Reserve.” Jerry Phillips successfully managed the Elliott State Forest for most of his career and was responsible for many of the land transactions that helped build it to its current dimensions. He was also personally responsible for the creation of the Silver Creek Heritage Grove, which has never been formally recognized. David Gould has championed permanent boundaries for the reserve and a name change to honor Phillips’ work and we strongly support this proposal, with the following boundaries and considerations.

http://www.orww.org/Elliott_Forest/History/Phillips



ORWW recommends using the West Fork Millicoma CCC Trail, the Eleven Ridge (1400) Road, and the Elk Ridge (1000) Road in Sections 10, 11, and 12 as the northern boundary to the proposed reserve for State School Trust lands in Township 24 S., Range 11 W. (see map). This area, about 900 acres in size, should be devoted to actively managing the largest and oldest trees

in the Elliott in perpetuity as an educational demonstration of reforestation, thinning, and salvage logging to achieve those objectives.

4. During the past 2 ½ years ORWW has spent a significant amount of donated time and private funding to produce a comprehensive Elliott Forest educational website for the benefit of Oregon students, teachers, researchers, and taxpayers. This process has involved students and instructors from Southwestern Oregon Community College (SWOCC) and the website is currently comprised of multiple local history books, government reports, news articles and editorials, radio interviews, and hundreds of historical maps and photographs -- in addition to documenting six educational field trips and a student written draft plan with recommendations for expanding Elliott Forest recreational opportunities (see attachments):

http://www.orww.org/Elliott_Forest/Recreation

Our interest is to continue building the Elliott website for the direct benefit to Oregon high schools, community colleges, and universities. Other ORWW content and resources can likewise be used and developed into accredited online courses and school-related reports that can be used to correct, supplement, challenge, or further illuminate existing content. Proposed research projects regarding wildlife habitat, economics, and carbon sequestration can likewise be transparently shared and considered by all Oregonians with an interest in these topics.

Thank you for considering these proposals for the future ownership and management of the Elliott State Forest.

Sincerely,

Russ Sapp, ORWW President

Wayne Giesy, ORWW Treasurer

Bob Zybach, ORWW Secretary

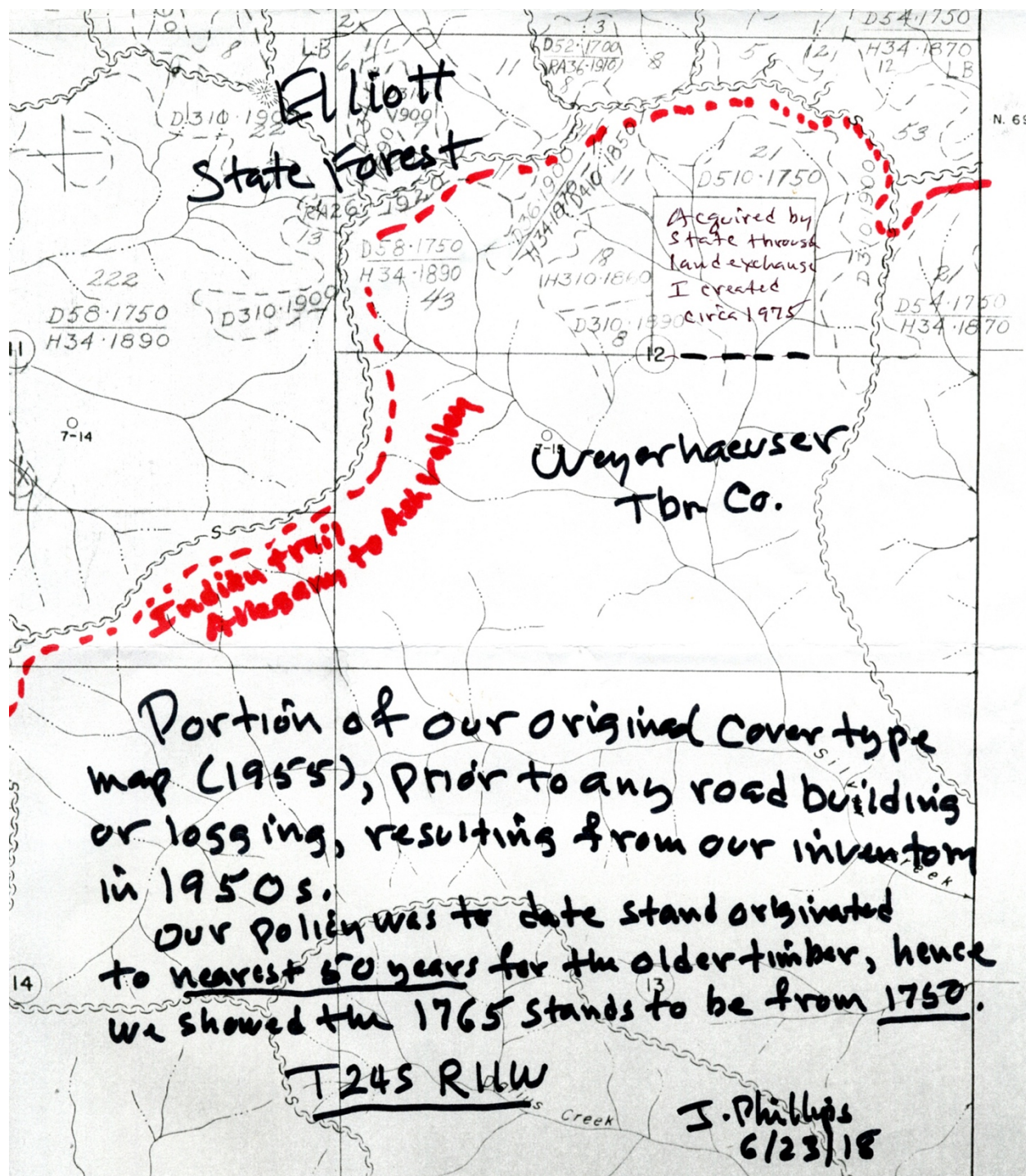
Oregon schoolchildren involved in the reforestation of the Vincent Creek Burn in 1952, just north of the Elliott State Forest. Photo and caption provided by Jerry Phillips.



April 1952

Group of 300 High School kids from
Elkton and Reedsport doing their annual
tree planting program - on private and
BLM timberlands - this year on lands
~~that~~ burned by the large Vincent Creek -
Weatherly Creek fire of 1951. Gathered for
their lunch of hot dogs, ice cream, and
sandwiches.
(led by Foresters from Coos Fire Patrol,
Douglas Fire Patrol, and BLM.)

Jerry Phillips' June 23, 2018 historical map of Silver Creek Heritage Grove as 40-acre land exchange from Weyerhaeuser following salvage logging operation, Tsp. 24 S., Rng. 11 W., Sec. 12. Note the ages and locations of standing timber in 1955 and compare to map on page 3.



October 28, 2017 Eugene *Register-Guard* editorial by Fergus McLean supporting the Giesy Plan proposal for its potential research value for carbon sequestration income and scientific comparisons to active management income. In turn, ORWW strongly supports McLean's proposal regarding an Oregon forest carbon research institute as described in his editorial.

GUEST VIEWPOINT

Make the Elliott a forest carbon research hub

By FERGUS MCLEAN
For The Register-Guard

The Clean Energy Jobs bill, which will create jobs while reducing Oregon's carbon footprint from 60 million tons a year to 50 million tons by 2025, is percolating in Salem in preparation for the 2018 legislative session.

Work on the bill — Senate Bill 1070 — comes as new survey data reveal that Oregon's forests absorb 36 million tons of carbon dioxide annually, more than half the state's entire previously known carbon footprint. This new recognition of the workings of our forest carbon cycle has come as a wake-up call to policy-makers.

It's difficult to exaggerate the possible economic importance for Oregon of the amount of carbon we now know our forests sequester. A crude valuation of 36 million tons per year, based on the California price for

carbon offsets, would mean Oregon's forests absorb half a billion dollars' worth of carbon every year.

How can Oregon monetize this huge value? We have the experts, but they need support to lead us through the shift to a carbon-friendly forest policy.

The Giesy Plan for the Elliott State Forest promises one way that former adversaries can join forces to create a forest research institution in the Elliott and maximize forest revenue through a deeper understanding of the effects of management practices on the forest carbon cycle. Authorization of an Elliott Forest-based research institution can be included in SB 1070 — but that train leaves the station in mid-November, when the draft legislation goes to the Office of Legislative Counsel.

Wayne Giesy is an industry old-timer who first proposed his simple forest management strategy in the 1980s. It has found its

way into timber plans authored by Gov. John Kitzhaber, Rep. Peter Defazio and Sen. Ron Wyden. An updated Giesy Plan for the Elliott State Forest is gaining traction in Salem, and shares surprising similarities with ecologically based, carbon-oriented proposals for Elliott management policy.

The classic Giesy Plan formula first protects streams and waterways, then divides the remaining forest equally between protected reserves and areas devoted to industrial management. A carbon-oriented Giesy Plan, after setting aside 20 percent of the Elliott for riparian reserves for coho salmon, would divide the remaining Elliott land into not two, but three 22,000-acre pieces: one for industrial-style logging and a second for expanded older timber reserves surrounding the nests of spotted owls and marbled murrelets, as Giesy suggested.

The third sector should be dedicated to the study of forest management through the creation of a world-class forest carbon research institution to push the frontiers of understanding of the workings of forest carbon cycles, including production of the highest quality (and highest value) carbon credits, building on Oregon's overwhelming leadership in forest carbon production. This institute would manage the forest's carbon reserves, monitor ecological and economic effects of all management activities, and conduct public education and outreach. Researchers would investigate job creation opportunities that arise when a forest is managed as a functional ecosystem rather than a single-purpose lumber factory, combine those with creating and monitoring a carbon reserve, and integrate both with a wildland forest fire training academy to create a new kind of forest workers' career path.

We can call the new institution the Elliott State Educational and Experimental Forest.

Income from logging could cover the annual obligation to the Common School Fund, while the sale of Elliott carbon credits can finance the building of a world-class Oregon forest carbon research institution and, over time, complete the \$120 million buyout of the forest from the Common School Fund.

By authorizing the trading of Elliott Forest carbon credits in the language of SB 1070, lawmakers can launch a brand-new economic paradigm for Oregon's forests.

Fergus McLean of Deater, a retired forester, is a member of the Southwest Willamette Forestry Collaborative. A longer version of this essay can be found at <http://oregon2.sierraclub.org/many-rivers> and <http://world.350.org/eugene>.


This page shows how the 2018 SWOCC Draft Elliott Forest Recreation Plan appears online, including HTML hyper-text “Recommendation” links to individual online chapters authored by student teams. The following page shows how the students’ Recommendations appear in their complete form, as page 47 in the printable PDF format of the Draft Plan.

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2018 SWOCC Elliott State Forest Draft Recreation Plan

RECOMMENDATIONS



"2018 SWOCC Elliott State Forest Draft Recreation Plan" Authors, Instructor, and Field Guides, West Fork Millicoma River, Elliott State Forest, April 17, 2018. Photograph by Anne Farrell-Mathews, Southwestern Oregon Community College (SWOCC) staff photographer.

Students were asked to develop topical recommendations for maintaining or improving recreational opportunities on the Elliott State Forest for the advantage of the landowner, the Oregon School Trust. These opportunities would focus on legal requirements of net income and/or educational value for Oregon students and interested public.

Consensus Elliott Recommendations: Investment and Income

- 1) **Signage.** The Elliott does not have road signs and only one historical marker. Signage is needed for safety, educational, and recreational purposes. (Chapters [1](#), [2](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#), [9](#), [10](#), [11](#), [12](#))
- 2) **Maps.** Good road and/or trail maps do not exist for the Elliott or for its potential recreational and educational attractions. These could be made and sold for income. (Chapters [1](#), [2](#), [5](#), [7](#), [9](#))
- 3) **Improve Roads and Trails.** At the time of the field trips the roads were in very poor condition, needing rock, grading, and clearing; trails were overgrown. (Chapters [1](#), [2](#), [5](#), [7](#), [8](#), [9](#), [10](#), [11](#), [12](#))
- 4) **Install Campgrounds.** Commercial campgrounds could be developed for seasonal recreational and educational uses, including hunting, fishing, sightseeing, harvesting. (Chapters [3](#), [6](#), [10](#), [12](#))

Potential Elliott Forest Recreational Income

RECOMMENDATIONS

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Consensus Elliott Recommendations: Investment and Income

- 1) Signage. The Elliott does not have road signs and only one historical marker. Signage is needed for safety, educational, and recreational purposes. (Chapters 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12)
- 2) Maps. Good road and/or trail maps do not exist for the Elliott or for its potential recreational and educational attractions. These could be made and sold for income. (Chapters 1, 2, 5, 7, 9)
- 3) Improve Roads and Trails. At the time of the field trips the roads were in very poor condition, needing rock, grading, and clearing; trails were overgrown. (Chapters 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12)
- 4) Install Campgrounds. Commercial campgrounds could be developed for seasonal recreational and educational uses, including hunting, fishing, sightseeing, harvesting. (Chapters 3, 6, 10, 12)

Potential Elliott Forest Recreational Income

- 5) User Fees. Recreational users of the Elliott could pay access and parking fees for activities such as hunting, fishing, camping, sightseeing, and harvesting. (Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12)
- 6) Strategic Logging. Commercial logging could create and maintain scenic vistas, game foraging areas, berry fields, roads, trails, campgrounds, etc. (Chapters 5, 7, 10, 11, 12)
- 7) Grant Applications. A number of existing sources for installing signage, increasing fish runs, developing wildlife habitat, etc., already exist and can be used. (Chapters 1, 2, 6, 9)
- 8) Local Business Networks. Existing recreational businesses on the perimeter of the Elliott could benefit by increased forest recreations, map and supply sales, etc. (Chapters 2, 7, 9)
- 9) Donations. Another potential source of income could be voluntary donations by people or organizations directly using the Elliott or supporting its uses. (Chapters 2, 4, 7, 9, 12)

Other Recommendations

- Chapter 2: 1) Forest “zipline” attraction(s).
- Chapter 7: 1) Increase hatchery fish runs; 2) improve hatchery visits; 3) conduct fish research.
- Chapter 8: 1) Improve fish habitat.
- Chapter 9: 1) Limit access to birds during nesting season; 2) conduct bird research.
- Chapter 10: 1) Use of herbicides for vegetation management.
- Chapter 12: 1) Install commercial communication towers.