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# Save the Elliott Rainforest

## Take Action



### Save The Elliott State Forest

from [Cascadia Wildlands](#)

03:49

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Your Action Needed! Stop Post-Fire Logging in the Siskiyou State Forest

**Save The Elliott State Forest from Cascadia**

Wildlands on Vimeo.

**Following years of citizen opposition and grassroots organizing, on May 9, 2017 the State Land Board voted unanimously to keep the Elliott under public ownership!**

**Then lawmakers followed that up on July 3, 2017 by advancing \$100-million in state bonding revenue to protect the Elliott forever.**

The Elliott is now saved from the saws, and Cascadia Wildlands remains a part of the ongoing process to develop its 50-year management plan, along side a number of other key stakeholders.

### **More Information And Actions**

**In 2014** the Oregon State Land Board adopted a plan to sell approximately 84,000 acres of the Elliott State Forest. **On November 15, 2016**, one proposal was submitted by a private timber company to privatize the Elliott State Forest. The State Land Board, comprised of Governor Brown, Treasurer Read, and Secretary of State Richardson was split on whether to pursue the privatization option. The Governor presented a plan that would utilize up to \$100 million in potential state bonding toward a public ownership approach that would better safeguard public access and the outstanding values the forest provides. However, Treasurer Read is **standing firmly behind a revised version of the protocol that requires the private company's proposal to**

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that requires the private company's proposal to incorporate Forest Sustainability Council certification and provide Oregon tribes with the right of first refusal if the private company chooses to sell any of the acquired land. Secretary Richardson is strongly urging the sale of the Elliott as soon as possible.

The State Land Board is bound by the Oregon Constitution to generate revenue from Common School Fund lands, of which the 82,000 acre Elliott State Forest is composed. Beyond going so far as to sell the forest, **which is illegal**, the Land Board has **wide discretion in determining how best to manage** the forest as an asset for the Fund.

Parties interested in purchasing the Elliott were required to submit plans to the Land Board by mid-November 2017, outlining a management strategy that would meet the public benefits the State is requiring any potential purchaser to include. Any potential buyer was required to provide a plan that shows how it would meet the purchase price of \$220 million, along with conserving 25% of the forest for older forest management, protecting waterways, maintaining public access on 50% of the forest, and providing jobs. Lone Rock Timber submitted the only proposal to the State. The Land Board is slated to make a decision whether to accept this proposal in December 2016. Conservation groups and public lands advocates from across Oregon have been fighting on every front to ensure a public ownership outcome from this short-sighted process.

Lawmakers  
Advance \$100  
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Keep the Elliott  
State Forest  
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Forest Public!

The decision to sell the forest followed on the heels of the cancellation of 28 timber sales in 2013, due to a lawsuit filed by Cascadia Wildlands and allies, demanding marbled murrelets, a rare seabird that nests on the Elliott, not be harmed by clearcuts. In response, the State Land Board voted to sell parts of the Elliott State Forest. Three of the five parcels were sold in the spring of 2014 to Seneca Lumber Company and Roseburg Forest Products (see [here](#) for more details). The State Land Board had decided to postpone the sale of the remaining two parcels and develop an alternative for sale. The Land Board ultimately landed on the process outlined above.

**Background:**

The 93,000-acre Elliott State Forest in the central Oregon Coast Range rapidly became the “poster child” for regressive forest management practices, broken conservation promises, and lost opportunities in the realm of badly needed climate change mitigation.

The Elliott State Forest is between Reedsport and Coos Bay, and goes as far east as Loon Lake. Much of the Elliott burned in the 1868 Coos Bay fire which burned across nearly 300,000 acres from Scottsburg south to Coos Bay. The forest regrew naturally, nearing 150 years of age today, and consisting of pockets of old growth that survived the fire. The Elliott was the first state forest, formed in 1930 through a consolidation of scattered state “common school fund” lands, and named after the first State Forester — Francis

## Named after the first state forest, the Elliott State Forest

Fueled by an unsustainable revenue expectation, state officials at the end of 2011 adopted a new Forest Management Plan that ramped up clearcutting and nearly doubled the allowable harvest rate within this impressive Coast Range forest. This plan would turn large sections of this diverse forest into herbicide-sprayed, plantation-style timber farms, be devastating to water quality and salmon and includes barbaric control measures for bears and beavers.

The 2011 plan abandoned a nearly 20 year-old science-driven, “habitat conservation plan.” It opened the northwestern part of the Elliott to clearcutting, previously set aside as a wildlife reserve. The abandoned conservation plan was part of a mitigation action that allowed for the “taking” of 43 federally endangered northern spotted owls. After all those birds were “taken”, the state excused itself from the agreement, and adopted a new Forest Management Plan requiring a drastic increase in clearcutting of older forests.

In addition to the spotted owl, other wildlife protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) that depends on the Elliott State Forest is the marbled murrelet and coastal coho salmon.

As carbon emissions-driven climate change becomes more apparent and the very high carbon-sequestration potential of these temperate forests becomes better known, the question of using this land for carbon-offsets versus timber

harvest becomes an important one. Even the clearcuts allowed under old Conservation Plan released as much carbon into the atmosphere as an additional 45,000 cars on highways every year. The 2011 forest plan doubled that.

**In 2012** the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) tried to implement the new management plan, but was forced to stop all clearcutting of older forests (all logging) because of a lawsuit alleging ODF was harming wildlife protected by the Endangered Species Act (ESA), in particular, the marbled murrelet.

**In 2013** ODF settled the lawsuit by dropping 28 timber sales on all of Oregon's coastal state forests.

Ultimately, the state decided if they can't clearcut endangered species habitat, maybe someone else can, so they developed the Elliott Opportunity, which seeks a buyer for 84,000 acres of Common School Fund land in the Elliott. **For more information on the Elliott State Forest, and ways to take action click here.**

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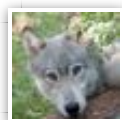
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