



# **Clatsop County**

## **Board of Commissioners**

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November 28, 2022

Oregon Department of Forestry  
2600 State Street  
Salem, OR 97310

While Clatsop County supports the development of a Western Oregon State Forest Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), the current version introduces any number implications/concerns for our rural community, including 1) reduced local government revenues, 2) reduced local government services and service levels, 3) elimination of family-wage jobs supporting all corners of our rural county; 4) reduced activity for ancillary support businesses; 5) impacts on the social fabric of our community, including schools, healthcare, not-for-profits and civic organizations.

Beyond the financial impacts on local governments, which are devastating in their own right, we are also concerned about the economic and social implications of the HCP. In rural communities like ours, we need more family wage job creators – not less. Not only does timber provide vital discretionary revenues to local governments, but the industry also provides and/or supports a wide range of family-wage jobs, businesses and philanthropic activities.

Family wage jobs are the cornerstone for a healthy and sustainable community, the HCP development process should consider the impacts of job loss on our rural economy. Clatsop County does not have the transportation system and developable lands (including industrial) to make up for the loss of timber supported jobs. The state needs to be circumspect on the impacts of the HCP, as your decision will influence this community for generations.

Clatsop County continues to ask for balance between social, economic and environmental factors while encouraging the state to postpone the approval of the draft HCP and reengage with local elected officials to address the factors in a more nuanced and equitable manner.

In addition, we are concerned about wildfire and how the draft HCP might impact future wildfire risk. We have long-standing evidence that passive approaches to forest management greatly increases accumulations of ground fuels, and canopy closures, thereby contributing to the risk of catastrophic-scale wildfires. We need to learn from the mistake of others and actively manage the forests, while providing common sense and reasonable environmental protections for wildlife and waterways.

We respectfully ask the Board of Forestry to delay the approval of the draft HCP and reengage with the counties and other local stakeholders to develop a plan that will not undermine our community and the institutions and businesses that make it safe, livable and sustainable. While the state forests are a statewide asset and resource – do not forget about those that live and work in Clatsop County. The quality of our life, our businesses, and our institutions should matter and be a consideration as well.

For the sake of equity and fairness, please work with us to develop a better and more balanced plan.

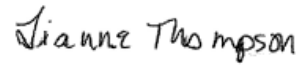
Thank you for your consideration.



Mark Kujala, Chair, District 1



John Toyooka, District 2



Lianne Thompson, Vice Chair, District 5



Courtney Bangs, District 4