

## **Oregon Forest Waters Declaration**

WHEREAS, a majority of Oregonians get their drinking water from waters originating in Oregon's forests, as more than 75 percent of Oregon's municipal water supplies are sourced from public and private forestlands; and

WHEREAS, Oregon has failed to keep pace with neighboring states and federal forest agencies in its protections of forest waters; and

WHEREAS, Oregon law allows more intensive logging closer to rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands than neighboring states, which erodes banks, muddies waters, removes shade, raises water temperatures and depletes water supplies; and

WHEREAS, Oregon law allows the aerial application of toxic pesticides across broader areas of forest watersheds than neighboring states and federal forest agencies, which affects forest waters and endangers the health of residents in front-line communities throughout rural Oregon; and

WHEREAS, Oregon law allows more intensive logging in landslide hazard locations than neighboring states, which increases sediment and debris in forest waters and the costly treatment of drinking water for Oregonians; and

WHEREAS, plantation-style, industrial management of forestlands, which results in dense rows of even-aged trees, has increased the risk of larger and hotter forest fires that damage fragile watersheds and reduce forest water storage; and

WHEREAS, better and more up-to-date forest management and harvest practices will help to reduce the risk of severe forest fires by increasing the expanse of fire-resistant older trees that act as natural fire breaks adjacent to forest waters; and

WHEREAS a special exemption in Oregon law allows conflicts of interest in setting and enforcing timber policies by the Board of Forestry and subsidiary committees that otherwise would be prohibited under state ethics laws; and

WHEREAS, a warming climate and more volatile weather patterns necessitate stronger practices to protect our drinking water supplies and maintain healthy forests across the state; and

WHEREAS, clean and protected forest waters are vital to our families and our communities for use in the home and for recreation, tourism and businesses in every sector of our economy;

THEREFORE, the people of Oregon, find it necessary to update and improve Oregon laws to better protect our health and safety and to promote our economic well-being by protecting and preserving Oregon's forest waters.

**\*\* Sign up to our email list to learn what you can do to protect Oregon's forest waters. \*\***