

Images That Cry Out for Change

By Trygve Steen
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Stimson Lumber Company owns a significant area of forestland in Tillamook County Oregon. They are clearcut logging their land very extensively. They have logged 100% of their legally allowed forest area in the Jetty Creek Drainage during just the last 17 years. If they were logging in the Jetty Creek drainage at their stated 45 to 50 year cycle of management, they should have only logged a maximum of 40%. Since Jetty Creek is the primary source of water for the town of Rockaway Beach this logging has had important impacts on those people's water supply. This logging creates both water quality and quantity issues. Rockaway Beach water has had an unusually high number of alerts from OHA & DEQ for elevated trihalomethane (a carcinogen), likely because of organic and sediment materials that result from logging. The city of Rockaway Beach has had to spend nearly 2 million dollars on improved water treatment, largely because of logging impacts on their water. Logged watersheds also suffer from low water flows during the summer months, when a tourist-based economy needs more water. Given how devastatingly young plantations burn in a forest fire, this water supply will be highly vulnerable to disruption for at least the next 40 years. The following photo was taken of Stimson's last logging in the Jetty Creek drainage, on 1/9/2021.



© 2021 Trygve Steen Jetty Creek drainage

Fire Severity

“Our findings suggest

intensive plantation forestry...

rather than pre-fire biomass

**were significant drivers of wildfire
severity.”**

Zald and Dunn (2018)

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Extensive, large clearcuts can also be found in the area where the next photos were taken. These areas are between one and two miles in from the first gate on Eckloff Road, off Highway 131 west of Tillamook, near Oceanside. This whole area is being intensively logged by Stimson Lumber Company, using clearcuts that appear to mostly be at the State Forest Practices Regulations maximum of 120 acres. Seeing this logging, one has to ask - - - Is Stimson planning on leaving the area? (given how completely the large area is being logged) These photos were taken on Saturday March 13, 2021. Peter Karnig introduced me to this area and has been documenting Stimson's logging for many years. You can see some of his extensive black and white images of this area on Instagram.

Clearly, what is documented here raises serious questions about Oregon's Forest Practices regulations and how they are enforced.

**KEY
CONCEPT:**

Sustainability

“promote **environmentally,**
economically, and socially
sustainable management of
Oregon's...public and private
forests.”

– Oregon Board of Forestry's Mission

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© 2021 Trygve Steen Photo near Eckloff road



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Peter Karnig Photo near Eckloff road

The logging seen in the next image involves transforming a carbon fixing forest, mainly 45 to 50 years old when carbon fixation begins to get more effective, into substantial carbon dioxide output from burning slash as well as decomposition of logging debris and soil organics. The logs represent a small fraction of the carbon involved and much more carbon dioxide will be generated before lumber from those logs resides in a building for longer term storage.

It is important to recognize that logging associated activities account for more than one third of Oregon's carbon dioxide emissions, so there is room for significant change.

Stimson's trees need to be grown for a longer time to enable more carbon storage, thus providing an important contribution to resisting climate change. This also brings other significant benefits: better protection of biodiversity - especially soil organisms that support the forest; higher quality water plus more summer flows from watersheds; and lowered risk of total loss from wildfire (especially with the likely increase of fire frequency that

is projected from climate change). Remember the plantation growing in this clearcut will be a total loss if there is a fire during the next 15 to 20 years. Older, larger trees still retain significant value for use in lumber, even if they have been burned in a forest fire.



© 2021 Trygve Steen Photo near Eckloff road

BILLS IN LEGISLATURE:

SB335 Reorganize State Board of Forestry

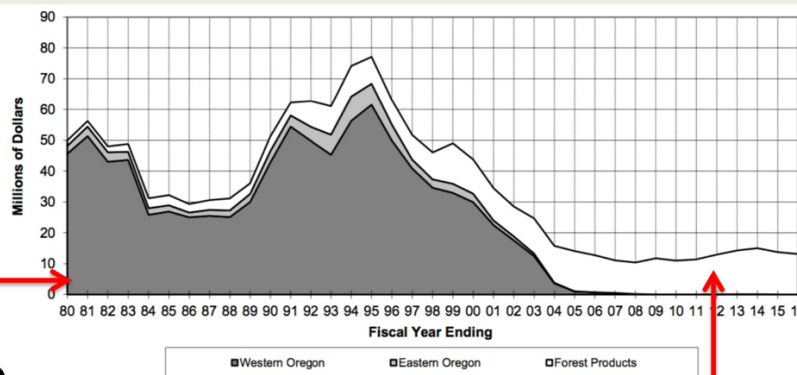
HB2357 Eliminate OFRI, move timber tax money to Department of Forestry & OSU Extension for outreach

HB2379 Harvest Tax Bill, 5% <2,500 Acres
2% small owners; 0 or 1% FSC*
*Forest Stewardship Council Cert.

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Timber Tax Revenue in Oregon

**“Real”
Taxes
Have
Dropped
to ~Zero**



**This “Tax” Goes Back To the
Industry, Not Communities**

Oregon Legislative Revenue Office (2018)

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Professor Trygve Steen resides in Multnomah county and is a retired Professor of Environmental Science and Management at Portland State University. His background includes a Ph.D. from Yale University. He spent over 45 years teaching forest ecology courses and other courses focused on the principle of sustainability for environmentally related decision making. He has done region wide documentation of forest management on Federal, State, and private lands, including hundreds of hours doing aerial photography. He has also documented the outstanding biodiversity present in our native forests at all levels, from the soil up through the canopy. He has intensively studied Oregon Department of Forestry management in relation to the Homesteader Sale on the Clatsop State Forest, where an old-growth stand of trees was logged (there is continuing documentation of this on-line). He has done extensive public presentations about forest ecology, biodiversity, and management.