


# Activists Shut Down Seneca Jones Biomass Plant

EUGENE, OR—Scores of activists with Cascadia Forest Defenders and Earth First! converged on the Seneca Jones biomass plant at 90201 State Highway 99 N. Eugene, Oregon this morning to protest the company's privatization of public lands in the Elliott State Forest and ongoing pollution in West Eugene. Currently several people have locked themselves to equipment at the plant, effectively blocking the "truck dump" where biomass is loaded into the incinerator. A banner has been  dropped off of a tower reading: "Seneca Jones: Privatizing the coast range, polluting West Eugene."

The activists are bringing attention to Seneca Jones' role in privatizing the Elliott State Forest. This month Seneca closed on their purchase of 788 acres in the Elliott, called East Hakki Ridge. Co-owner of Seneca Kathy Jones recently expressed the company's intention to clearcut East Hakki and replace it with Douglas fir plantation.

Cascadia Forest Defender Richard Haley commented, "However Kathy Jones paints it, her company is a bad neighbor everywhere it operates. Here in Eugene, Seneca pollutes. In the Elliott, Seneca clearcuts and puts up 'no trespassing' signs in pristine, never before logged forest. East Hakki is no longer a place where locals can go hunt, fish, hike, camp or watch birds. Now it is corporate property."

Coos Bay citizen science group Coast Range Forest Watch documented Marbled Murrelet nesting behavior in East Hakki Ridge in May. The bird is federally protected under the Endangered Species Act, which prohibits actions that injure or kill threatened species—including destruction of habitat. A month after Marbled Murrelets were found in East Hakki, conservation law organizations filed to sue Seneca Jones in

the event of logging in the timber sale. Murrelets were also found in two timber sales purchased by timber company Roseburg Forest Products. Another parcel is up for sale this fall, and the State Land Board is considering privatizing the entire forest.

Despite Seneca's claim of being sustainable, the biomass plant failed its first EPA air pollution test in 2011 but still requested more state funds to offset its production costs. In spite of its high impact on local air quality, Seneca receives 10 million dollars in tax credits from the state of Oregon under the Business Energy Tax Credit Program.

"The plant has had a bad reputation in this community since its opening," said West Eugene resident Matthew Hawks. "It's marketing itself as a 'green' solution in my neighborhood, but is actually harming the environment around us, especially the air we breathe."

The plant, which only employs 11 people, releases an estimated 17,900 pounds of air toxins into West Eugene Neighborhoods annually, in addition to the 73,000 pounds released each year from the mill itself. There are three schools within three miles of the Seneca biomass facility.

"While clearcutting and privatization in the Elliott State Forest is done in the name of public schools, this irresponsible company is taking millions of public dollars and impacting the health and safety of school children in their own neighborhood. It feels really twisted," said Cascadia Forest Defender Cordelia Finley.

The Eugene-based Cascadia Forest Defenders carried out this action with activists from across the continent following an annual Earth First! camp-out in the woods of Southern Oregon, called the Earth First! Round River Rendezvous.

Background:

Seneca Jones plans to clearcut never-before-logged forest in the Elliott

<http://earthfix.opb.org/land/article/seneca-jones-bids-on-elliott-state-forest-land-a-c/>

Oregon biomass plant poses disproportionate health risks to low income families and people of color.

<http://www.eugeneweekly.com/2009/12/10/news.html#3>

On the sale of East Hakki Ridge

[http://theworldlink.com/news/local/pristine-forests-sold-off/article\\_46301acc-ca3e-11e3-bbc5-001a4bcf887a.html](http://theworldlink.com/news/local/pristine-forests-sold-off/article_46301acc-ca3e-11e3-bbc5-001a4bcf887a.html)

Marbled Murrelets sighted in East Hakki

[http://theworldlink.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/murrelets-surveyed-at-elliott-land-sale/article\\_de33949e-df78-11e3-953a-0019bb2963f4.html](http://theworldlink.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/murrelets-surveyed-at-elliott-land-sale/article_de33949e-df78-11e3-953a-0019bb2963f4.html)

Seneca powerplant requests increase in pollution cap after biomass plant has trouble meeting clean air standards

<http://www.beyondtoxics.org/work/biomass/>

Greenhouse gas emissions from incinerators undisclosed to the public

[http://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2010/10/biomass\\_is\\_not\\_oregons\\_clean-e.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2010/10/biomass_is_not_oregons_clean-e.html)

Seneca Sustainable Energies only employs 11 full time positions and receives 10 million dollars in tax credits.


<http://www.oregon.gov/energy/Recovery/docs/Seneca.pdf>

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**Protesters            scale            Oregon**

# capitol building

Salem, Oregon- This morning, two members of Cascadia Forest Defenders (CFD) climbed off the side of the “Oregon Pioneer” statue atop the state capitol with a banner proclaiming “KITZHABER’S LEGACY: PRIVATIZING THE ELLIOTT FOREST – CLEARCUTTING FOR PROFIT”. The State Land Board–Governor John Kitzhaber, Secretary of State Kate Brown and State Treasurer Ted Wheeler– will decide on a proposal to sell 2,714 acres of the Elliott State Forest at their December 10th meeting.

The proposal comes after years of public protest and  litigation over mismanagement of State Forest Lands as well as a sweeping lawsuit by conservation groups that has effectively halted most logging of sensitive habitat in the Elliott. With no guarantee that private owners would retain public values of conservation, CFD opposes the sale of public forest land.

“We are protesting because we think Oregonians deserve to know that their public land is being sold to private industry. If it is privatized, we will never be able to have a say on what happens to it again. This is our public comment,” says Erin Grady of Cascadia Forest Defenders.

The plans for privatization include three parcels in the Western side of the Elliott State Forest. All three parcels contain sections of mature, never-before-logged forest –suitable habitat for the marbled murrelet, an endangered sea bird that nests in old growth. This summer, a group of volunteer marbled murrelet surveyors with the Coos County-based conservation group Coast Range Forest Watch, documented murrelet nesting behavior in one of these parcels, making it a candidate for protection under the federal Endangered Species Act.

Department of State Lands (DSL) says that the land sale is

necessary in light of a pending lawsuit—filed last year by several conservation groups on behalf of the marbled murrelet—that has made the Elliott “unproductive.” Cascadia Forest Defenders are concerned that the parcels will be sold to the highest bidder—most likely to private timber companies. Much of the private land that surrounds the Elliott State Forest is already managed by the Washington-based Weyerhaeuser Corporation, one of the largest landowners in North America. Under private ownership, raw logs from the 2,700 acres could be exported overseas, rather than processed in local mills, furthering hurting the economies of Douglas and Coos County.

Even under public management, sensitive habitat in the Elliott is threatened by destructive logging practices. The Oregon Department of Forestry will resume clearcutting of ancient forest within the Elliott this fall. Salander Between, a 32-acre timber sale of mature, never before logged forest in the Loon Lake watershed— a popular recreation spot for Coos and Douglas County residents— is up for auction in October.

“Considering what a small percentage of the Common School Fund is actually made up by logging the Elliott, it is a travesty to permanently destroy this ecosystem and further destroy the watershed of Coos and Douglas County Citizens” says Ben Jones of Cascadia Forest Defenders.

DSL’s proposal comes at a time when public officials at the state and federal level are also pushing for more aggressive management, and potentially privatization, of our O&C forest lands—millions of acres of low elevation forest currently managed by the Bureau of Land Management.


“Whether it’s Defazio and Wyden on federal forests or Kitzhaber on state lands, Oregon democrats seems to be leading the charge on turning our remaining forests into dollars for private timber, at the expense of Oregon’s people, watersheds and ecosystems.” Says Jones.

No to privatization of the Elliott!

-Cascadia Forest Defenders

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## Elliott State Forest sale

The battle between environmental productivity and commercial productivity continues. 

Oregon's Department of State Lands has announced a new proposal to sell 2,700 acres of the Elliott State Forest, to be voted on at a State Land Board meeting in December.

The plans for privatization include three parcels in the Western side of the Elliott State Forest. All three parcels contain sections of mature, never-before-logged forest –potentially habitat for the marbled murrelet, an endangered sea bird that nests in old growth. This summer, a group of volunteer marbled murrelet surveyors with the Coos County-based conservation group Coast Range Forest Watch documented murrelet nesting behavior in one of these parcels, making it a candidate for protection under the federal Endangered Species Act.

DSL says that the land sale is necessary in light of a pending lawsuit–filed last year by several conservation groups on behalf of the marbled murrelet– that has made the Elliott “unproductive.” Clearcutting murrelet habitat in the Elliott is currently halted under federal injunction.

“In a time when the State Land Board should be taking responsibility for the mismanagement of the Elliott State Forest, they are going over the heads of the public and the courts and finding ways to manage our public lands for profit

instead of conservation,” says Erin Grady, an activist with Cascadia Forest Defenders.

DSL will accept comments on their proposal until September 3rd. With only two weeks left in the comment period, they have not released any details on age of stand, value of timber or potential environmental impact if these parcels are sold. “They are avoiding public process as much as possible with this decision.” says Grady.

Conservation groups are concerned that the parcels will be sold to the highest bidder—most likely to a logging company. Much of the private land that surrounds the Elliott State Forest is already managed by the Washington-based Weyerhaeuser Corporation, one of the largest landowners in North America. Under private ownership, raw logs from the 2,700 acres could be exported overseas, rather than processed in local mills.

“Once land is privatized, the public will never again have a say in what happens to it,” says Grace Pettygrove of Cascadia Forest Defenders. “It won’t be ours anymore- for jobs or the environment.”

Since 2009, Cascadia Forest Defenders have held tree sits, banner drops, and rallies to protest the clearcutting of native forests in the Elliott. In 2011, Cascadia Wildlands, Oregon Wild and other conservation groups launched a lawsuit over the mismanagement of marbled murrelet habitat on state lands. Judge Ann Aiken issued an injunction in November 2011 that effectively stopped cutting in potential murrelet nesting habitat. The ongoing lawsuit is the catalyst for this abrupt plan to dispose of the Elliott. See the summary of the plan on the Department of State Lands website: [http://www.oregon.gov/dsl/SLB/docs/agenda\\_items/2013%20Agenda%20Items/slb\\_jun2013\\_item1b.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/dsl/SLB/docs/agenda_items/2013%20Agenda%20Items/slb_jun2013_item1b.pdf)

For photos of the parcels up for sale, follow this link. Media is welcome to use any of these photos:

# Cascadians Protect Native Forest at White Castle

Cascadia Forest Defenders are meeting the challenge issued by timber-sponsored forest ecologists, Norm Johnson and Jerry Franklin, at the White Castle Timber Sale located 20 miles east of Myrtle Creek. Tree sitters, blockaders, and the support crew have found their new home near the head waters of Myrtle Creek on O&C land about to be logged in the name of science. Yesterday, after being discovered by a survey crew, they were visited by various levels of law enforcement including the Douglas County Sheriff and Myrtle Creek Police.



[Photo: Cascadia Forest Defenders]

This experimental pilot project called a Variable Retention Harvest or VHR is the latest excuse to log trees that would otherwise be protected. Norm and Jerry have come up with a sloppy method of clear cutting in older forests that leaves clumps of trees standing to regenerate the stands that have been logged. The land will not be replanted. Instead, they expect to see meadows and brush abound to provide habitat for butterflies and food for deer. They claim that these late seral habitats are lacking in Oregon because of the high levels of pesticides and herbicides used after conventional clear cuts. Rather than a decrease in toxins used on land already cleared, they propose to log Native Forest with Old Growth trees to make room for meadows. "We're asking people to look at that and not see forest destruction but see forest



renewal – and that’s hard,” says Johnson when interviewed by the High Country News in April 2013.

“The White Castle project is a cynical attempt to pass off clear-cutting century-old trees as restoration,” said Doug Heiken of Oregon Wild in a press release. “In reality, the true focus of this project is providing cheap timber to old-growth dependent logging mills at taxpayer expense.”

White Castle could have far –reaching impacts on the 2.6 million acres of O&C land scattered across Western Oregon. In May, Senator Ron Wyden announced that he would be crafting his own plan for these vast Commons in response to the Defazio-Schrader-Walden proposal that would share the goal of increasing the cut for private timber companies in our public forests. He mentioned that “harvest will be consistent with the most advanced forest management practices advocated by Northwest experts and demonstrated in pilot projects.” If this new way of clear-cutting Old Growth and Native Forest is accepted by the public here, it will likely become the model for Wydon’s plan for the O&C Lands. Cascadia Forest Defenders demand that all Native Forest and Old Growth trees on the O&C be preserved. The faltering health of our planet cannot be further compromised to solve the unrelenting fiscal crisis brought about by a single-crop economy dependent upon unsustainable extraction of natural resources.

White Castle includes 77 acres of Native Forest that has never been logged. It did burn 109 years ago, but many Old Growth trees survived the fire. These towering ancestors are surrounded by their 108 year old progeny in a lush moist forest punctuated by flowering rhododendrons, trilliums, and wild iris amongst salal and Oregon grape. It is considered critical habitat for 5 pairs of spotted owls. Three fens, rare forest wetlands, are located within the sale. Though Norm and Jerry propose to leave clumps of trees at their borders, the clear-cuts above them will doubtlessly cause these habitats to dry out.

Having run out of big trees on private land, the timber industry is playing an industrial scale shell game with Oregon's O&C Forests. Between Defazio's proposal, Kitzhaber's timber panel recommendations, and Wydon's framework, Oregonians could easily fall into the trap of trying to choose the best plan for our forests with the timber barons walking off with our trees in their back pockets at the end of the day leaving us in the same fiscal crisis we are in now but without a vast Native Forest on the Commons. Cascadia Forest Defenders sees through this trap and encourages Oregon not to play.

"The new fight in Westside forests is over these 80- to 160-year-old future old-growth forests. This is really where the battle is going to be fought out," Franklin told the press in an interview at White Castle last spring.


Cascadia Forest Defenders are ready.

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## **Cascadia Forest Defenders Commandeer Billboard**

*Launch campaign to protect O&C lands*

Last night under the cover of darkness a stealthy and vigilant crew of Cascadian Forest Defenders converted a billboard on the side of I-5 in Eugene to read "O & C TRUSTS: Making yesterdays ecocidal mistakes... again!" This billboard was repurposed in the name of Forest Defense in order to spread the word about the growing threat to 2.6 million acres of forest land in Western Oregon.

The Oregon and California Railroad Lands traverse 18  western counties in Oregon. The lands have been managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) since 1937, when an act of

Congress took them away from a corrupt railroad company. Half the revenues from logging on these lands go to the general funds of these counties, which are struggling financially to maintain services. Congressmen Defazio, Walden, and Schrader are sponsoring a bill that would give 1.6 million acres of federally managed forests to the state of Oregon to be managed by a trust of private timber campaigns. The remaining million acres would be managed by the Forest Service. 350,000 acres of trees between 80 and 125 years old would be in the 1.6 million acres managed for maximum sustainable yield by the Timber Trust according to a recent draft. These acres would no longer be protected by the federal laws that allow for public comment and action when a sale is proposed. Camilla Mortensen of the Eugene Weekly reports: "Currently, if a conservation group has reservations about a federal timber sale or a clear cut, it can appeal the sale and take the matter to court. Under DeFazio's plan, that option for saving these public forests would be gone. 'They can litigate the legislation,' DeFazio says, but there would no longer be a federal process for each timber sale." The plan calls for reduced riparian zones and massively increased logging. The plan also sets aside a million acres for conservation to be managed by the Forest Service, that agency currently involved in Old Growth and late successional stand timber sales on both sides of the Cascades. Cascadia Forest Defenders believe that the only thing worse than a forest managed by the federal government is a forest managed by a timber company. We want the O&C Lands preserved in perpetuity and will oppose attempts to privatize the commons. We demand that Defazio, Walden and Schrader drop their proposals and instead work to preserve what remains of native forests.

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# Catch debate between Krieger and Cascadia Forest Defenders on OPB

Jason Gonzales of Cascadia Forest Defenders and Rep Wayne Krieger will debate two bills that will criminalize protests of logging practices that damage habitat. From [OPB](#) today at 12:20PM

*Two bills passed in the Oregon House this week aim to curb protesting on state forest lands. HB 2595 would make it a crime to interfere with logging operations in state-owned forests. A first offense would be considered a misdemeanor, but a subsequent conviction would be considered a felony with a mandatory minimum sentence of 13 months. HB 2596 would allow private contractors hired by the Oregon Department of Forestry to sue activists for costs such as damage to their equipment and loss of wages.*

*Both bills passed the House by wide margins. They now move on to the Senate.*

*Do you work in the timber industry? Have you ever protested a logging operation? How would this legislation affect you?*

*GUESTS:*

*Wayne Krieger: Oregon State Representative (R-Gold Beach)*

*Jason Gonzales: A spokesperson for Cascadia Forest Defenders*

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# Rep Wayne Krieger tries to criminalize free speech, require mandatory sentencing

-House Bill Seeks Mandatory Prison Time for State Forest Protests-

Salem, Oregon. – A bill has been introduced to the Oregon legislature recently that would create a felony out of free speech and protest activities. HB-2595 clearly intends to stop the types of protest activities seen in the last four years on State forest lands. The language of the bill requires a mandatory minimum 13 month prison sentence for a first offense of failing to comply with orders to not hinder logging operations, with a second offense earning protestors a full 5 years in prison. This isn't the first time such a bill has been attempted in Oregon. A similar bill, known as the "Interference with Agricultural Operations Bill", was previously deemed unconstitutional when challenged by attorney Lauren Regan with the Civil Liberties Defense Center (see link below). Bills such as this are designed to have a chilling effect on citizens exercising their free speech rights to protest the management practices of the Oregon Department of Forestry.

HB 2595 is scheduled for a hearing in the House Judiciary Committee on Monday, March 4th at 1pm in room HR243 in the capital.

HB 2595 was introduced by Wayne Krieger of Golds Beach, Oregon, according to Jason Gonzales, of Friends of Oregon's Forests who adds; "A read of Mr. Krieger's campaign contributions easily demonstrates how connected he is to the industry of resource extraction in Oregon, with funding consistently coming from logging interests. In a time where

budgets are being slashed, schools defunded, and taxpayers being asked to foot more and more bills for public safety, it is a wonder that any politician would attempt to impose a bill requiring minimum prison sentencing for non-violent protest activities that are currently prosecutable under other statutes. These desperate moves by industry funded politicians seeking to silence a public's growing concern about climate change, and the industries that cause it, are intolerable and must be brought into the view of the public." A link to Wayne Krieger's campaign finances is available below.

A coalition of environmental groups are quickly coming together to combat this bill. Those groups will offer public testimony on Monday March 4th at the capital when HB 2595 comes up for an initial judiciary committee hearing. Many members of this coalition will be available for comment to the media immediately following the hearing in the Capital, and will be reachable at the contact numbers provided above.

"Our state politicians should be standing up for our public lands, not punishing the non-violent activists who do. Our prisons are overcrowded. It's not only unethical, but also a waste of public money to apply mandatory minimum sentencing to civil disobedience," said Grace Pettygrove of Cascadia Forest defenders.

Cascadia Forest Defenders (CFD), has spent years working to prevent clear cutting of Oregon's state forests, with a strong focus on the Elliott State Forest, which is specifically mentioned in the bill. Many of the projects CFD has contested were enjoined by a lawsuit brought by conservation groups Cascadia Wildlands, and Oregon Wild, when the presiding Judge agreed that it seemed likely that the Oregon Department of Forestry was violating the Endangered Species Act by destroying habitat for the marbled murrelet, that case is still awaiting trial. Under HB 2595, members of CFD could spend over a year in prison for trying to prevent these types of operations from taking place, even with an action as simple

as standing in a road and refusing to move.

“Civil disobedience brings about great change, as when Ghandi’s use of non-violent protest gained India’s independence from the British Empire. It is a part of our American heritage from Henry David Thoreau to Martin Luther King Jr. To criminalize the peaceful protest of those committed to saving our native forests would be a violation of the democracy upon which our country was built and make martyrs of passionate young people trying to create a better world” said Cristina Hubbard Project Director of Forest Web, a Cottage Grove based conservation group.

Link to HB2595 text:  
<http://www.leg.state.or.us/l3reg/measures/hb2500.dir/hb2595.intro.html>

For information regarding Wayne Krieger’s campaign contribution history, click the following link :

<https://secure.sos.state.or.us/orestar/cneSearch.do?cneSearchButtonName=search&cneSearchFilerCommitteeId=3477>

For information on the unconstitutionality of the Interfering with Agricultural Operations bill follow this link :

<http://cldc.org/justice-in-action/former-cases/activist-defense-2>

Krieger has publicly stated that contributions to his campaign buy access. Watch [here](#).

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# EARTH FIRST! OCCUPIES STATE CAPITOL

EARTH FIRST! OCCUPIES STATE CAPITOL SAYING 'PROTECT OUR STATE LANDS'

Salem, OR: Near 10:00 AM, Cascadia Earth First! and Cascadia Forest Defenders converged at the Oregon State Capitol. Activists chained themselves together and staged a "die-in" in the offices of Ted Wheeler and Kate Brown while others climbed the building's flagpoles, hanging banners reading, "Oregon: For Sale by Kate Brown and Ted Wheeler" and "Defend Oregon, No Compromise, Earth First!"

Protesters are targeting Secretary of State Kate Brown and Treasurer Ted Wheeler – both members of the State Land Board – after passing a plan in October of last year that will nearly double the annual clearcut in the Elliott State Forest. Today's protest is an escalation in a series of protests calling on the Land Board to stop the clear cutting of ancient forests and to separate public school funding from state forest management.

The State Land Board is responsible for the management of the Common School Fund, a fund that is generated from taxes on certain lands operated by the board. According to the Oregon Department of Forestry, which is overseen by the State Land Board, forestlands are to be 'managed for timber production'. Some revenue from these lands goes to funding public education in Oregon, but less than one percent of Oregon school funding comes from logging the Elliott State Forest. Governor Kitzhaber himself referred to the Common School Fund as a "drop in the bucket" when compared to total state spending on education.

"The elected officials of the State Land Board are allowing



large extraction-based industries to make a quick profit at the expense of Oregon's healthy future," says Emmalyn Garrett of Bandon, OR. "We won't let narrow industry interests dirty the air and water, destroy biodiversity, and decrease Oregon's quality of life." According to Garrett, today's protest calls on the State Land Board to take responsibility for their failure to protect Oregon's public lands ahead of private industry profit.

Cascadia Earth First! and Cascadia Forest Defenders demand:

No more clear cutting ancient forests.

Drop the 2011 implementation plan for the Elliott State Forest.

Separate our school funding from public land management.

No more privatization of public lands.

Earth First!

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## **Forest Defenders says Kitzhaber pits schools against trees**

Salem, Oregon: At 7: AM on Thursday, May 10th a member of the Cascadia Forest Defenders climbed the flagpole in front of the State Capitol, demanding that Governor Kitzhaber and the State Land Board decouple public school funding from state forest management. The activist hung a large banner reading "Schools vs. Trees? We want both!"


While Governor Kitzhaber claims that increased clear cutting in the Elliott State Forest is necessary to maintain funding for public schools, less than one percent of Oregon public

school funding comes from logging on state lands. In April, Governor Kitzhaber admitted that revenue collected from certain state lands—called the Common School Fund— was a “drop in the bucket” for our starving public school system. Cascadia Forest Defenders say: Stop clear-cutting ancient forests for “a drop in the bucket”!

“The two things I care about most in my state are schools and forests, and now I know that Kitzhaber has compromised both.” says Eugene teaching assistant Erin Grady. “We’re here because we think that Kitzhaber is pitting our schools against our forests, and we don’t think that’s fair to either.”

In 2011 Kitzhaber and the State Land Board approved a plan that nearly doubles the annual clearcut in the Elliott State Forest. The Land Board claims that logging on state lands must increase to maintain the Common School Fund, which distributes profits from some state logging and mining operations to public schools.

Yet, Oregon’s timber elite have dodged millions of dollars in taxes since Kitzhaber got rid of the timber harvest privilege tax in 1999. The Oregon Department of Revenue estimates that Oregon loses \$70 million in tax revenues per year since Kitzhaber passed Oregon House Bill 3575. That’s nearly ten times what the state gets annually from clear cutting the Elliott State Forest.

In 2011, 48.8 million dollars were distributed to schools  from the Common School Fund, a negligible contribution to Oregon’s 2011 school budget of nearly 6 billion.

Cascadia Forest Defenders want good schools for Oregon’s children and vibrant, intact ecosystems. We believe that education should not be funded by clear-cuts. There are no schools on a dead planet!

\* For more info about Cascadia Forest Defenders : [www.forestdefensenow.com](http://www.forestdefensenow.com)

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# Forest defenders plan ruckus at State Land Board

On Tuesday, February 14th at 10 a.m. Cascadia Forest Defenders are hosting a Valentine's Day ruckus at the first State Land Board meeting of 2012, confronting Governor Kitzhaber about his direct hand in the destruction of Oregon's ancient forests.

In October, Governor Kitzhaber approved a plan nearly doubling the annual clear cut in the Elliott State Forest, effective 2012. This Tuesday the governor and his land board will also approve the privatization of over 1,414 acres of public forest land in Southern Oregon. Privatization will leave the fate of sensitive watersheds in the hands of corporate timber.

Through a variety of lighthearted stunts, CFD will bring light to the consequences of the governor's mismanagement of state lands. Rowdiness is encouraged. "We've asked nicely before," says Cascadia Forest Defender Grace Warner. "We've written letters, given public testimony, held a permitted rally, and even met with the governor in person. It's time for the governor and his timber baron friends to feel a little bit of discomfort."

In 1995, Kitzhaber approved a plan for the Elliott State Forest that allowed a 500-acre annual cut for the next 60 years. On Oct. 11, 2011, the governor approved a new plan allowing an annual cut of 850 acres a year, with decreased protection for endangered species and riparian zones. CFD says that the governor broke his own promise and is allowing a bigger cut in an already devastated ecosystem.

At the Feb. 14th meeting, the governor will have the option to sell 1,414 acres of public land. The governor will also be voting on a process that will simplify the process of

privatizing land controlled by the State Land Board. CFD objects to the governor privatizing public land, especially when the price of timber is so low. "It would appear that the governor does not value the long term ecological or economic health of our region." says Warner.

Cascadia Forest Defenders is an activist community working to stop the destruction of Oregon's last ancient forests.

The meeting of the State Land Board is at 775 Summer St. in Salem. It begins at 10am on Feb 14th.