

The O&C Act of 2014: Getting Oregonians Back to Work in the Woods

- **The O&C Act of 2014 ends decades of timber harvest and restoration uncertainty** by clearly identifying O&C lands where timber harvest is the focus and by eliminating the most controversial harvests that often get delayed by successful challenges.
- **More than doubles the harvest on O&C lands.** Annual timber harvest over the last 10 years on O&C lands has averaged 150 million board feet. Under current policy that number will continue to go down. **This new bill has been modeled by the BLM - an objective official source that must implement the bill - and found to boost harvests sustainably to 400 million board feet per year for the next 50 years.**
- **Explicit direction to BLM drives harvests that must occur and helps agency overcome legal challenges.** BLM must provide sustained yield and the “highest consistent timber production” under this act, as well as treat a set percentage of lands every 5 years. The clear direction tips the scales in BLM’s favor if actions challenged.
- **The 2014 Act expands the land base** - converting BLM’s western Oregon public domain lands into O&C and bringing in key Forest Service lands that are easier to manage than current controverted lands, ending uncertain treatment of controverted lands.
- **The legislation provides expedited procedures and strict timelines for legal and environmental reviews, to ensure certainty and predictability in producing sustainable timber harvests and revenues from these lands.** While upholding federal environmental laws, the bill provides streamlined environmental analysis that looks at limited alternatives, requiring large scale environmental impact statements that analyze 5 years of work in the woods upfront, rather than at the individual project level. The analysis time for 5 years’ worth of projects still takes one year less than analysis would currently take for individual project - providing huge time savings.
- **Preparation of those documents requires upfront simultaneous consultation among federal agencies, so the days of tandem scientific analysis stretching over years are over.** And ensures issues addressed early to limit challenges to projects later
- After the initial analysis, subsequent projects that are consistent with the 5-year environmental review will not require further environmental analysis.
- **Adopts pre-decisional objection and legal processes mirrored on Healthy Forests Restoration Act that allow but limited challenges to timber sales and strict timelines.**
- **Eliminates the time-consuming and costly “survey and manage” rules for O&C lands.**
- Legislates that private land rights or agreements are not to be affected.
- **Uses proven forestry and most recent aquatic science** to produce sustainable scientifically defensible and modern harvests based on the work of Drs. Norm Johnson and Jerry Franklin.
- **Improves riparian management** based on the science of Dr. Gordy Reeves allowing for more targeted timber harvesting by tailoring protections to where the fish are located and the land is ecologically important.
- **Will reduce fire danger in the dry forests of Southern Oregon** by reducing tree density and providing new tools for private landowners to treat forest lands near residences within an area 150 feet of their own homes.
- **Directs lands for research** that can provide knowledge and scientific support for actions undertaken and benefit timber harvests on both public and private lands.