

http://www.oregonwild.org/oregon_forests/old_growth_protection/westside-forests/Western%20Oregon%20BLM%20Backyard%20Forests/timber-trust-a-bad-deal-for-forests-counties

O&C "Timber Trust" - A Bad Deal for Forests and Counties



Approaching a clear-cut hillside on the BLM's Coos Bay District.

[Please click here](#) to send a letter to Rep. DeFazio on this proposal.

In February of 2012, after months of closed-door development, Congressional Representatives Peter DeFazio, Kurt Schrader, and Republican Greg Walden, released legislation that would increase logging on a million acres of BLM O&C lands to prop-up county funding.

The proposal, entitled the "O&C Trust, Conservation, and Jobs Act" (we'll call it OCTCJA or the Trust Act) was roundly criticized by Oregonians concerned about the impacts of clear-cuts on salmon, clean water, and other public values. Conservation groups like Oregon Wild have [publicly disagreed](#) with this proposal since the bill's inception.

Unfortunately, on July 31st, 2013, the O&C Trust Act gained momentum as it was marked up in the House Natural Resources Committee as part of a package of legislation spearheaded by Committee Chairman Rep. Doc Hastings (R - WA). His bill, H.R. 1526, mandates a vast logging increase on National Forests across the country, gutting environmental laws and public process.



What Does the O&C Trust Act do?

The 2013 version of the legislation differs only slightly from the 2012 version. It would:

- Place about 1.5 million acres of forest stands up to 125 years old on [O&C](#) and "Public Domain" lands in a "trust" that would be managed to maximize logging revenues for the benefit of counties. Additional land would be transferred to Coos County to provide revenue.
- In order to meet the monetary demands of cash-strapped counties, logging on these "trust" lands would at least double from the 15 year average.
- Manage these "trust" lands as private industrial timberlands under the Oregon Forest Practices Act, with some modifications for stream protections.
- Transfer remaining older forests to the Forest Service to be either protected or managed under the Northwest Forest Plan rules.
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O&C Trust Act (2012 version): By the Numbers

lands transferred	Units
BLM lands currently designated as Late Successional Reserve	418,000 acres (+ unknown number of Forest Service lands)
BLM forests predominantly over 80 years old	346,000 acres (+ unknown number of Forest Service lands)
BLM forests with dominant trees over 125 years old (old-growth)	117,000 acres (+ unknown number of Forest Service lands)
Designated Critical Habitat for the Northern spotted owl	653,000 acres
Streams with diminished logging buffers	12,300 miles
Lands currently designated as Riparian Reserves	327,260 acres
Total transferred to O&C Timber Trusts	1,532,182 acres
Total O&C forests transferred to Forest Service	612,000 acres

Key Problems With the Proposal

- Effectively dismantles the [Northwest Forest Plan](#).
- Removal of federal protections currently afforded to these public lands under the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, Federal Lands Policy and Management Act, National Environmental Policy Act and other federal laws.
- Management under the weak state Forest Practices Act, with minimal improvements ([see a comparison of BLM vs private land practices](#)).

- Failure to protect all remaining old growth, though it promises to do so. Older, natural forests (between 80 and 125 years old) totaling more than 350,000 acres would not be protected. And at least 120,000 acres of "young" stands have a second component of old-growth trees that won't be protected (see a [slideshow of old-growth trees in the "timber trust"](#)).
- Setting back a decade of restoration work on these forests and watersheds.
- Links the "trust" logging scheme to long-sought protections for special places like [Devil's Staircase](#) and [Wild Rogue](#) Wilderness areas.

[View a map](#) of how this proposal (2012 version) would divide up the land. More detailed maps are available upon request.

Where's This Going?

The July 2013 hearing indicates that Chairman Hastings intends to move the bill forward. Senator Wyden, as chair of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, is also [developing a proposal](#) pertaining to increased timber harvest on O&C lands. He is currently [seeking input](#) on his proposal.

[Click here](#) to send a letter to Rep. DeFazio on this proposal.



Additional Materials

- A brief [fact sheet](#) about the bill.
- A [four-page summary](#) of the 2012 bill.
- [Myths and facts](#) about the bill.
- Oregon Wild's [in-depth white paper](#) addressing problems with the 2012 bill.

Photos courtesy of Francis Eatherington (top); Kristian Skybak (middle) and Chandra LeGue (bottom).