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# Preface

## A Visionary Past

The year 2005 marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of Oregon's first state forest—the Elliott State Forest. For 50 years, the Oregon Department of Forestry has been managing the forest for the State Land Board and the Department of State Lands.

In 1912, Governor Oswald West and the first State Forester, Francis Elliott, envisioned a state forest that would provide a boon of social and economic values to the state. It took 18 years for their vision to come to fruition. Since that time, the Elliott State Forest has produced a wide range of economic, environmental, and social values for Oregonians.

Revenues generated from timber harvests flow into the Common School Fund, where it is carefully invested. A portion of the income from those investments is distributed twice yearly to every public school in the state. The Common School Fund was quite small during the early years of management; however, timber harvesting revenues over the years have made significant contributions to a fund that now totals over \$900 million.

Through active management, the forest continues to provide important habitats for fish and wildlife, recreational opportunities for people, good water quality, and numerous other social and environmental benefits.

Over the years, management plans for and operations in the Elliott State Forest have evolved in response to new science regarding the relationships among the forest, fish and wildlife, watershed health, and people. The earliest plans focused on managing the forest for timber and building a road system that would provide access for management, fire control, and the removal of forest products. Water quality and fish and wildlife habitat became important areas of focus in later plans. In 1995, endangered species concerns led to the development of a new *Elliott State Forest Management Plan* and approval of a Habitat Conservation Plan through the federal Endangered Species Act. Important provisions in the Habitat Conservation Plan have expired, and revised information about landscape management and the resources in the forest make it necessary to update both plans.

## A Promising Future

This Forest Management Plan is the next step in the continuing legacy started by Governor West and State Forester Elliott, and reflects their confidence in the capability of the Oregon coastal forests to provide a multitude of benefits to Oregonians.

Five years have been devoted to the development of this Forest Management Plan. The process has included consideration of alternatives, public comments, and scientific review. The Forest Management Plan uses a landscape approach that acknowledges the interdependence of economic, environmental, and social values. It is designed to deliver

benefits that include sustainable timber harvests and revenue, diverse habitat for native species, properly functioning stream systems, and recreational opportunities.

The Forest Management Plan is structured to ensure that management will respond to new information through monitoring, application of the strategies, and responses of the forest to management activities. The responses of the forest will be evaluated relative to the goals and assumptions in the Forest Management Plan, and appropriate adjustments will be made.

## **Addressing Today's Concerns**

For the past several years, Oregon has been facing significant economic challenges. The economic needs of our schools are a major concern. In addition, Oregonians' dedication to a healthy environment remains strong. To sustain long-term revenues, management must ensure that the forest and aquatic systems continue to function properly.

Managers, planners, and resource specialists have worked diligently and creatively to develop a Forest Management Plan that will ensure increased harvest levels through the development and maintenance of high-quality fish and wildlife habitats and healthy watersheds.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries (NOAA Fisheries) staff have been integral to the development of the Habitat Conservation Plan and this Forest Management Plan. The Forest Management Plan herein provides the foundation for the Habitat Conservation Plan.

The Elliott State Forest continues the tradition of demonstrating that state forests can achieve the 75-year vision of Governor West and State Forester Elliott, as well as the current vision: a forest that helps to support Oregon schools and provides for a wide range of social and environmental values that are important to Oregonians.

The planning team hopes that readers find this Forest Management Plan informative, and that it entices members of the public to visit and see for themselves the rugged beauty, richness, and productivity of the forest called "The Elliott."