



How to protect our Water



Drinking water is one of our most precious natural resource. Millions of Oregonians drink water that originates in forests. Forests store water, slow its flow, and filter particles to produce clean drinking water.

- In Oregon, 75% of all drinking comes from surface water.
- 167 separate drinking water systems serve 52 coastal communities.
- The vast majority of coastal drinking watersheds are privately owned and are harmed by some logging practices.
- Agriculture, commercial fishing and tourism rely on clean water and healthy watersheds.

Water Quantity (Perry, 2016 Ecohydrology)

- Large scale clearcuts and regrowth of plantations make low summer water flow even lower.
- Flows can still be reduced 40-50 years later.

Water Quality

- **Roads** cause the most problem with sediment in water, followed by landslides and clearcuts.
- **Too much sediment** keeps chlorine from working and creates carcinogenic chemicals.
- **Small fishless streams** make up the majority of stream miles, but **no buffers** are required in OR.
- **Post-fire salvage logging** can encompass more acres than allowed in non-burned areas. This causes more sediment in the water and increased risk of landslide.
- **Chemicals** that are harmful to human health are used against rodents, insects, fungus, and other plants in Douglas Fir tree plantations. They are then detected in drinking water.

Costs of Water Treatment

Clean, protected forest waters are vital to rural and urban communities

Rockaway Beach Watershed now requires pre-treatment of sediment-laden water at Jetty Creek intake and installation of wells for summertime flow. COST: Over \$2 million.

Extensive logging above Salem's reservoir occurred before the algal bloom shut down the water system. Fertilizer, silt and warmer water are the likely cause. Cost for additional treatment: \$75 million.

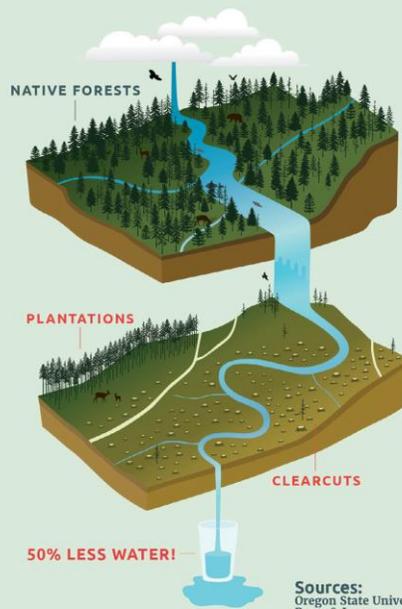
Prospects for change

Logging laws: Oregon's Forest Practices Act is weaker than our neighbors. Because of our lack of stream management for salmon (larger buffers to cool the water and reduce sediment), we lose out on significant federal grants, while the salmon fishing industry suffers. The 2020 bill to increase no-spray buffers and provide notice of spraying was not enough. Further changes are needed, such as increased forested buffers to protect drinking water, pets and livestock from pesticides.

Managing forests for sustainability and resilience to hotter weather and drought will also result in more fire-resistant forests unlike plantations that burn more intensely. (Preserve multiple tree species, healthy understory, selective logging with smaller canopy breaks)

WE CAN'T MAKE MORE WATER

CLEARCUT-PLANTATION
FORESTRY REDUCES
SUMMER STREAM FLOW
BY FIFTY PERCENT
COMPARED TO OLDER
FOREST WATERSHEDS



Sources:
Oregon State University
Perry & Jones 2017
Segura et al. 2019

For both studies, OSU researchers compared 60 years of streamflow data collected from two adjacent watersheds – one had been clearcut and replanted (plantation-style) and the other had not been logged. Both studies found that due to their inefficient usage of water, plantations cut water levels in half during summer months!

This finding has major implications for the industrial model of forestry, especially in the era of climate change.

Join with Tax Fairness Oregon to work on incentives for sustainable harvesting

Email Jody@taxfairnessoregon.org for next steps.

We read the bills and follow the money