



Oregon Logging Conference Resolution 2006-4

A Resolution for Completing Federal Assurances

In 1999, the Washington State Legislature passed landmark legislation relating to forest practices, salmon recovery and water quality enhancement. The legislation instructed state land management agencies to amend existing laws to implement recommendations set forth in the Forests & Fish Report which will lead to improvements to salmon habitat and water quality on more than sixty thousand miles of forested streams in Washington state while providing a regulatory climate and structure more likely to keep landowners from converting forest lands to other uses. The legislature further directed the governor to obtain *federal assurances* from federal natural resource agencies that forest practices conducted in compliance with the state laws will meet the requirements of the Endangered Species and Clean Water Acts.

WHEREAS, the forest industry, small landowners, tribal governments, state and federal agencies and counties worked diligently for nearly two years to reach agreement on scientifically based changes to the forest practices rules, as outlined in the Forests & Fish Report.

WHEREAS, in 2001 permanent forest practices rules were implemented in accordance with the Forests & Fish Report to increase riparian buffers to improve fish habitat and water quality, improve road construction and maintenance activities, increase protection for steep and potentially unstable slopes and implement a science based adaptive management and monitoring process for monitoring, evaluating and amending forest practices rules to incorporate new information, and

WHEREAS, state and private forest landowners have been implementing this landmark law, replacing more than 1,200 fish passage barriers and opening up more than 700 miles of fish habitat, and

WHEREAS, the Department of Natural Resources and the governor have jointly sought *federal assurances* by submitting an application to the National Marine Fisheries and US Fish & Wildlife Services for approval of a statewide programmatic Habitat Conservation Plan, and

WHEREAS, the federal agencies are currently reviewing and making a final determination on the application and for the programmatic Habitat Conservation Plan, and

NOW, THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED, that the Oregon Logging Conference and its members call on the National Marine Fisheries Service and US Fish & Wildlife Service, along with all of their respective employees, to utilize to the fullest extent possible the authorities and expedited procedures to approve and finalize the programmatic Habitat Conservation Plan and implementing documents.