

May 31, 2019

Oregon Board of Forestry  
Board Support Office  
2600 State Street  
Salem, OR 97310

Dear Board of Forestry:

The City of Ashland values environmental protection and desires continued safeguards for water resources to protect their integrity, function and value to our community. As such, we support your desires to ensure that streamside protections for the Siskiyou Region be made consistent with the riparian protections currently in effect for the rest of western Oregon. Proper protection of the Siskiyou Region's water sources is essential to ensure clean water for all the water users in the Rogue River Basin. Inadequate stream buffers allow streams to get too warm resulting in water quality concerns onsite as well as downstream.

The health of our watersheds is critical and stronger protection of riparian zones will help prevent degradation of our invaluable water sources by reducing thermal loading of streams and by reducing erosion and sedimentation. Municipal drinking water providers are held to firm standards around temperature and nutrients in our source water, and must adhere to Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements. When riparian areas are not properly managed, the risk of toxic algae outbreaks increases and other water quality concerns arise that can ultimately lead to increased treatment or mitigation costs.

Strengthening the stream buffer rules in the Siskiyou Region to the standard of the rest of western Oregon is a practical approach and one which the Board of Forestry should adopt without hesitation.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. Please feel free to contact us should you wish to discuss further.

Sincerely,



Paula Brown, P.E.  
Public Works Director



Julie Smitherman  
Water Conservation Specialist

