

Association of O and C Counties

Prepared by Alex Cuyler, July 7, 2009, for Lane County Board of Commissioners

GENERAL

- Lane County's membership within the Association of O and C Counties goes back at least 30 years.¹ Lane County's (Grange) advocacy on the O and C lands can be traced as far back as 1904.²
- The Forest Management Subcommittee of AOC was formed in 1999 to build a formal bridge between AOC & O&C. It has its own budget and BoD. Through the Subcommittee, AOC contracts with O&C to implement PL 106-393/110-343. Also through this budget, AOC joins O&C as the major supporters of the National Forest Counties & Schools Coalition, the national face of reauthorization of the federal forest payments.³ (AOC and O and C together contribute about \$120K annually to the NFCSC).
- "In 2008, it took a bigger Coalition of just over 1300 organizations, three years to pass the SRSCA 2008. Today, given the politics of the nation, the economy and the size of the federal deficit, it will take a much larger and much broader Coalition all of the next 2 ½ years to pass the renewal of SRSCA."⁴
- "Our primary goal was to impress upon the DOI staff members the unique nature of these lands from a historical, legal, and physical perspective. We emphasized the fact that those lands are very different than the National Forests. We made the point that the primary purpose of these lands is timber production with the principle of sustained yield. We emphasized the fact that these lands are not multiple use lands, and also pointed to the legal history which makes that abundantly clear."⁵ (This conversation also yielded a promise from Interior to work on attaining carbon credits for withdrawn O and C lands.)
- "That advocacy would continue after Lane County's departure, perhaps unmoderated by Lane's participation in the formation of its positions. Lane County's 374,215 acres of O&C lands would not go anywhere, but the county would no longer belong to the organization formed specifically to ensure that those lands are managed in ways that yield the greatest benefits to the county and its residents."⁶

BY LAWS OVERVIEW

The Association of O and C Counties is led by an Executive Committee of three officers, with a total Board of Directors consisting of nine county commissioners all of whom serve a one year term. The BoD is elected at the annual meeting, where each member (current with annual membership payment) county is provided three votes. A process for "present by proxy voting" is established within the by-laws. To change the by-laws, a 2/3 vote is required by those present or present by proxy at either the annual meeting, or a special meeting called for such purpose (with five days notice required).

By comparison, the Association of Oregon Counties also has an Executive Committee, but the total BoD can be as large as 44 members, with selection of those members mostly being locally generated (several are appointed by the President). There is additionally a variety of non-commissioner members (affiliates and associates).

Both associations are ORS 190 entities (intergovernmental agreement). The "Objects" of the groups are similar (but not identical): maintaining a permanent organization to secure cooperation among counties, to cooperate with members of the Oregon Congressional Delegation in the protection of the interests of the members, and to secure harmony of action in matters that affects the rights of counties. AOC's interests focus on efficient methods of local government, O and C's interests focus on the Oregon and California revested grant lands.

¹ Phone conversation with former Lane County Administrator, Bill VanVactor

² Phone conversation with Executive Director, Rocky McVay

³ Email from Gil Riddel, Policy Analyst, Association of Oregon Counties

⁴ National Forest Counties and Schools Coalition, June 2009 Bulletin

⁵ July 1, 2009 letter to Members of the Association of O and C Counties, on their 6/29-30 meetings in Washington, DC.

⁶ 5/18/09 Editorial, Eugene Register Guard