



Woodland Owners Who Love Their Land

Ref: OSWA and the Private Forest Accord

February 17, 2022

Dear Members,

In November 2020, the OSWA Board of Directors voted to sign on to the Private Forest Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) as a private forest landowner negotiation representative. The Board of Directors approved hiring Jim James as a contractor to represent OSWA in the negotiations once he retired in May of 2021. Over time, an agreement was reached that later became known as the Private Forest Accord (PFA). In September 2021, Jim James outlined the final key points and special considerations for Small Forest Landowners (SFO) contained in the PFA to the Board of Directors and received guidance to sign the final agreement. On October 31, 2021, the PFA was signed by all negotiation team representatives. The PFA agreement is now written into legislation in three bills that are now before the legislature.

Within the legislation, there is unique set of concessions given to the small private forest landowner to ease some of the burden of the new regulations. Within the legislation are technical assistance, financial assistance, and some compensation for economic values impacted by this legislation. OSWA has created a guidebook providing more details covering the aspects of the PFA that affect the small forest landowner. These adjustments to the regulations only apply to small forest landowners.

Our challenge this coming year is to maintain our commitment to making this PFA work for our families. This will require educating ourselves on the details of this agreement. We must engage and communicate with ODF, the Forest Practice Committees, and the Board of Forestry to ensure the rule-making process follows what was agreed to in the PFA.. We must work with our partners and within our chapters to show these new conditions will not defeat our enthusiasm for being forest landowners and the pride we have in being good stewards.

Today, OSWA is in a strong position with our partners. We have developed good will and political capital within the legislature. Our state level leadership is stable and enthusiastic with a new Executive Committee and experienced Executive Director. Let us focus on building new alliances with partner groups, build our membership, and lead the landowner community with energy, innovation, adaptation, and pride in our legacy while embracing the future.

Sincerely,

Ken Nygren
OSWA President