

OSWA President Ken Nygren and retired OSWA Executive Director Jim James were invited guests of Governor Brown for the formal signing of the Private Forest Accord on May 18, 2022. Following Governor Brown and State Forester Cal Mukumoto, Ken was one of four guests invited to speak and share their perspective on the day.

Hello Friends, my name is Ken. I am the current President of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association, commonly known as OSWA. We want to thank the Governor's office and our fellow landowners for inviting us to be a part of this different, and hopefully not unique, approach to balancing the social, biological, and economic requirements necessary for creating sustainable forests on the Oregon landscape. A very special thank you goes to Jim James, who very capably represented our organization in the small group negotiations with integrity and class.

I am a forest landowner and I come from a family of forest landowners. In Oregon, there are over 65,000 family forest owners like me who manage 35% of Oregon's private forests. As one would expect, there are 65,000 different management strategies from 65,000 different families with diverse forests and diverse objectives. No matter which goals we choose to manage toward, we are united by a love for our forests and desire to be the best stewards of our properties.

Many family forests are owned by multiple family members often under the umbrella of a family corporation or a trust. As you can probably imagine, each member of the family brings their own values and views on how to manage the family forest. The decisions on how to steward the forest arise from a collaboration of these family members. The "kitchen table" conversations leading to these decisions require that we understand and respect each other. By engaging with each other, we also learn that our goals are neither mutually exclusive nor motivated by self-interest and often are the same. By seeing each other as people with good intentions and sharing our views with integrity, we can reach the hallowed middle ground where sustainable management can be achieved for the benefit of all.

The Private Forest Accord represents the culmination of many "kitchen table" conversations about incorporating a different management strategy for riparian areas to provide homes to specialized wildlife while still providing affordable housing materials and living wage jobs for humans. Sitting at the table together revealed to all the participants that we all want the same overarching goal – to keep thriving, healthy, sustainable forests on the landscape.

Family forestland owners have a deep and very personal connection to their properties. For many of these owners, the forest is an integral facet of their family identity. We pour our family wealth and sweat equity into growing a healthy forest. We live on our properties. We recreate on our properties. And we meditate and seek solitude on our properties. Because of these connections, we have deep feelings about changes that increase the burdens of ownership on our families. It was gratifying to have our unique circumstances heard during the drafting of the accord and legislation and special consideration given to implementing the Habitat Conservation Plan on our properties.

OSWA is committed to keeping the spirit of the Private Forest Accord alive by staying actively engaged with our state agencies throughout the rulemaking process. We are now joining hands with our partners at the Oregon Forest Resources Institute and OSU Extension to understand and educate our members and the public on the details of the Accord and the new rules.

And, finally, I have personal gratitude for Bob Van Dyke, Sean Stevens, and Kaola Swanson for continuing to meet with our association leadership after the Accord was signed to help write

into the legislation the unique aspects of the Accord that are specific to Small Woodland Owners. Today I would like to extend an offer from our organization continue the "kitchen table" conversations and explore ways for our organizations to partner toward other mutually beneficial projects.

Thank you.