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Press Release

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Bill to Partner on Increased Management of Federal Forests Lands to Protect Rural Communities from Wildfire Passes Both Chambers

SALEM – Yesterday [SB 872](#), which directs the State Forestry Department to collaborate with the respective Douglas & Coos Forest Protection Associations and the United States Forest Service, with a focus on protecting lands and rural communities within the wildland-urban interface from fire on federal lands through stewardship to decrease wildfire risk across Oregon through increased partnership with federal agencies, passed the Oregon House of Representatives with overwhelming bipartisan support & is headed to the Governor for her signature.

“I have been working on this legislation that will assist in addressing the critical issues related to wildfire on federal lands that threaten our rural communities for a number of years, said Senator David Brock Smith (R-Port Orford). On average, 80% of the acres burned in Oregon are on federal lands. Of the 20% acres burned on private, tribal and other lands, 15% are from wildfires coming off of federal lands. Of the 5% acres burned on managed private lands, they are kept to less than 100 acres. This and other data overwhelmingly support the active management used on private forest lands and the tools we can deploy within the federal forest land system to mitigate the fuels for fire, which will assist in protecting the health, life and safety of our rural communities and their residents while increasing timber production and growth of our rural economies.”

Senator Brock Smith’s SB 872 strengthens collaborative partnerships and directs Oregon Department of Forestry to work with federal agencies to increase forest thinning, reduce ladder fuels and other hazardous fuel loading, restore meadowlands within the forest system, increase biomass utilization and increase post fire disturbance recovery and restoration activities that will help mitigate future wildfires.

“We know what needs to be done to help mitigate wildfire on the federal forest landscape. This legislation will help move Oregon forward with the direction and strengthened partnerships for improvements across the federal forest landscape for our rural communities. I appreciate the support of this legislation and look forward to the work ahead that will benefit our rural communities and all of Oregon”, Senator Brock Smith concluded.

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