BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

In the Matter of Opposing the)	
Oregon Department of Forestry Western	.)	Resolution No. 26 -2023
Habitat Conservation Plan)	

WHEREAS, in November of 2017 the Board of Forestry (BOF) directed staff in the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) to explore the pursuit of a habitat conservation plan, including creating a business case analysis to determine financial viability for the agency under such plan; and

WHEREAS, in November of 2018 ODF staff released a business case analysis showing that a habitat conservation plan would increase the acres available for harvest by 12% as opposed to without a habitat conservation plan in which the acres would be reduced by 6% and this information was used to move the process forward; and

WHEREAS, in February of 2022 ODF released the Western Oregon State Forests Habitat Conservation Plan Public Draft (HCP) and in March 2022 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the HCP which proposes placing thousands of acres into conservation areas unavailable for harvest for 70 years, with the opportunity to add more at the discretion of ODF; and

WHEREAS, in reviewing the HCP and the EIS the Columbia County Board of Commissioners identified concerns relating to potential local socioeconomic impacts of the actions contained in these documents; and

WHEREAS, Columbia County's general fund budget is supported by timber harvest on the ODF State Forest Lands located in Columbia County; and

WHEREAS, the HCP and draft EIS for the HCP would preclude the generation of other property tax revenue and employment generating industries on those lands; and

WHEREAS, costs associated with county-provided public services including education, housing, public safety, and hazard resiliency will only increase during the 70-year permit period; and

WHEREAS, committing to HCP directed harvest actions in the Plan for 70 years will limit the County's ability to adapt to changing conditions; and

WHEREAS, the Columbia County Board of Commissioners represents an estimated 53,000 citizens, some of whom are employed in the forest products industry; and

WHEREAS, a reduction in timber harvest and jobs will have an impact on jobs and revenue in Columbia County; and

WHEREAS, the EIS failed to include an informed and comprehensive assessment of the longterm societal impacts of the proposed HCP; NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Columbia County Board of Commissioners oppose the Western Habitat Conservation Plan, which will have direct and indirect impacts on residents and our environment and threaten the long-term health and vitality of our communities.

Dated this day of Une ____, 2023.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

By:

Casey Garrett, Chair

Bv: Kellie Jo Smith, Commissioner By: Margaret Magruder, Commissioner

Approved as to form By:

Office of County Counsel