

June 7, 2003

Linda Goodman, Regional Forester
Forest Service, Region 6
PO Box 3623
Portland, OR 97208

Elaine M. Brong, State Director
OR/WA Bureau of Land Management
PO Box 2965
Portland, OR 97208

Dear Ms. Goodman and Ms. Brong:

I am writing in response to the current evaluation of the role of the Regional Ecosystem Office (REO) in coordinating federal land management activities and evaluating their efforts. The Interagency Regional Information Coordinating Council (IRICC) is an important element of the office and should be charged with the responsibility for the timely development of common data content standards and complete data sets in cooperation with the states and to develop a public information exchange network throughout the region.

Oregon has coordinated with the REO in the development of the biennial report on the implementation of the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds. As we attempted to integrate information, a number of data coordination issues were identified. I predict that more issues exist and continuation of these responsibilities will assist future cross-boundary reporting.

A healthy ecosystem is essential to a livable Oregon and a strong economy. To achieve the twin goals of economic development and ecosystem or watershed health we need to develop programs that integrate the two. For example, I have announced that I will continue to implement the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds.

Furthering the twin goals includes investments in Oregon's information and knowledge assets that support management of ecosystem and watershed health. We need to take action now to better position our mutual resources to develop policy recommendations on information management priorities which cross agency jurisdictions throughout Oregon and the Pacific Northwest.

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I advocate an agenda that will improve the accountability and efficiency of delivering information services. I believe there is a widening gap between the current reality of our state and my vision for an Oregon with thriving communities, an economy that provides for the needs of all, and a natural environment that is healthy and thriving. I believe, for example, that we can build on the information system strategies of the Northwest Forest Plan and the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds.

I greatly value the serious consideration you are giving the formal charge of IRICC and efforts to encourage greater accountability with regard to the information and knowledge management across the Pacific Northwest. I also look forward to a stronger working relationship between the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee (IAC) and the Oregon Geographic Information Council (OGIC) and implementation of common policies that will nurture and expand the information resources available to the public.

Sincerely,

Theodore R. Kulongoski
Governor

TRK:JB:bk

c: Geoff Huntington, OWEB
Anne Badgley, REO
Elane Brong, IAC Chair
Jim Brown, GNRO
Dale Guenther, IRICC Chair
Mike Freese, Acting OGIC Chair