SUMMARY

Creates program for periodic review and modernization of State Forestry Department structure and programs to ensure effectiveness and efficiency, including but not limited to department programs relating to wildfire.

Appropriates moneys for biennium ending June 30, 2021, for carrying out certain actions under modernization program.

 Declares emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

Relating to State Forestry Department modernization; and declaring an emergency.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. (1) The State Forestry Department shall implement and administer a program to periodically review and modernize the structure and processes of the department as necessary to ensure department ability to adequately meet changing demands for wildfire prevention and wildfire response in this state, and to reduce the diversion of department resources from other programs to wildfire prevention and response. The periodic review shall include, but need not be limited to, a comparison of department structure and processes with the resource needs for adequate wildfire prevention efforts, adequate response to actual or potential wildfire incidents and adequately carrying out other department programs concurrently with department wildfire programs. The comparison must include, but need not be limited to, the efficiency and effectiveness of department structure and processes regarding wildfire fighting personnel and equipment re-

NOTE: Matter in boldfaced type in an amended section is new; matter [italic and bracketed] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in boldfaced type.
sources, reduction of the likelihood or likely severity of wildfires, antici-

pation and addressing of actual or potential changes to resource

needs and carrying out other department programs concurrently with

wildfire programs.

(2) Subject to ORS chapters 240 and 243, the department shall peri-
odically modernize the department structure and programs as the de-
partment deems appropriate to improve efficiency and effectiveness
with regard to wildfires. Modernization of programs and structures
with regard to wildfires:

(a) May include, but not be limited to:

(A) Hiring, assigning, reassigning, classifying or reclassifying per-
sonnel who are trained to fight or prevent wildfires to create condi-
tions that promote the recruitment, retention and effective use of
those personnel; and

(B) Hiring, assigning, reassigning, classifying or reclassifying per-
sonnel not described in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph as the de-
partment deems appropriate to provide support services to personnel
engaged in fighting or preventing wildfires, support reductions in the
likelihood or likely severity of wildfires or enable the carrying out of
other department programs concurrently with wildfire programs.

(b) Shall ensure that:

(A) Wildfire programs are supplied with modern equipment in
amounts and types that the department deems appropriate for re-

dponding to actual or potential threats of wildfire in this state; and

(B) Equipment assignments within this state are modernized as
necessary to address changing needs, conditions and equipment re-
ources.

(c) Shall include efforts to develop or improve arrangements with
insurers and other private parties to encourage landowner cooperation
in reducing the likelihood or likely severity of wildfires.

(3) The department may retain the services of third party evalu-
ators to identify, analyze or make recommendations regarding the modernization of all or part of department structures and programs regarding wildfire, including but not limited to identifying, analyzing and making recommendations regarding possible funding sources for meeting wildfire personnel or equipment resource needs, wildfire prevention needs and support personnel needs.

SECTION 2. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropriated to the State Forestry Department, for the biennium ending June 30, 2021, out of the General Fund, the amount of $______, which may be expended under the modernization program described in section 1 of this 2020 Act for converting not more than 50 seasonal positions for personnel who are trained to fight or prevent wildfires into permanent full-time positions that have duties including, but not be limited to, the fighting or prevention of wildfires.

SECTION 3. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropriated to the State Forestry Department, for the biennium ending June 30, 2021, out of the General Fund, the amount of $______, which may be expended under the modernization program described in section 1 of this 2020 Act to fill equipment resource needs related to wildfires, including but not limited to aviation assets.

SECTION 4. This 2020 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2020 Act takes effect on its passage.