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TO: All media /friends

Protecting The Earth's Lungs: Worthy Garden Club Grants \$100,000 to Forest Saving Research by Oregon State University's Dr. Beverly Law

BEND, OR. The Worthy Garden Club announced today that it has granted \$100,000 to Dr. Beverly E. Law, Professor Emeritus at Oregon State University to complete essential forest carbon research as part of a larger effort addressing urgent issues in climate change. The preservation and conservation of mature forests in Oregon will serve as a primary tool to mitigate increases in atmospheric carbon, and this gift will support Dr. Law's research on regional carbon emissions and the potential of Oregon's forests to capture and store large quantities of carbon on both public and private land.

In previous work, Dr. Law has shown that reducing timber harvests by half on public lands and doubling current harvest cycles on private lands from 40 to 80 years will substantially reduce carbon emissions and increase carbon capture and storage in trees and root systems. She and others have shown that if Oregon forests are allowed to grow to maturity, they could double the amount of carbon stored in tree biomass.

"Dr. Law has distinguished herself as the world's leading scientist on common sense strategies for capturing and storing carbon in Western forests," said Roger Worthington, President of the Worthy Garden Club. "Her work will also help us pinpoint which private and public lands in Oregon have the best potential for mitigating climate change."

The timing is right. We need to reduce CO₂ emissions 45% by 2030 to limit the global average temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius. To prevent the most serious consequences of climate change, removals of atmospheric carbon dioxide must equal additions no later than

2050, and must not exceed emissions after that. A [U.N. report](#) synthesized global climate action plans and found that given the climate pledges submitted so far, greenhouse gases will increase 16% from 2010 to 2030, suggesting that the planned emissions reductions and increased removals from the atmosphere by forests need to be more aggressive.

Governments worldwide have pledged to protect 30% of lands and waters by 2030 and 50% by 2050 for both climate mitigation and biodiversity. To reach these lofty goals and prevent a worsening climate catastrophe, we need workable solutions to capture and sequester atmospheric carbon that don't rely on pie-in-the-sky technologies.

Dr. Law has shown that the Pacific Northwest has a large amount of forest area that should be high priority for protection by 2030 and 2050. PNW forests have been shown to have an equal or greater potential for carbon storage as the Amazon Rain Forest. Yet, Oregon has the lowest percentage of its forest area permanently protected among the eleven western US states (10%).

"It's not well known that the timber industry is a major source of carbon pollution, ranking higher than transportation, agriculture, commercial and industrial sources," said Rick Martinson, the WGC's executive director. "Selective harvesting, longer rotations, allowing slash to decompose naturally, and smart reforestation can all significantly reduce global warming.

"We need our elected officials, oversight agencies, and the public to understand the critical need to develop responsible management methods that protect the public resource, address climate change, and provide a truly sustainable supply of timber. It's not easy, but recognizing the issue and working to find a balance between the public need, climate considerations, and industry viability is essential to meeting today's needs while preserving the ability of future generations to live in a healthy and vital economy."

The science is sobering. In the last 100 years, Oregon has removed the equivalent of *all* live trees in the Coast range forests, returned 65% of the carbon contained in biomass to the atmosphere and transferred 16% to landfills. Furthermore, in Oregon harvest-related emissions are many times greater than those from wildfires.

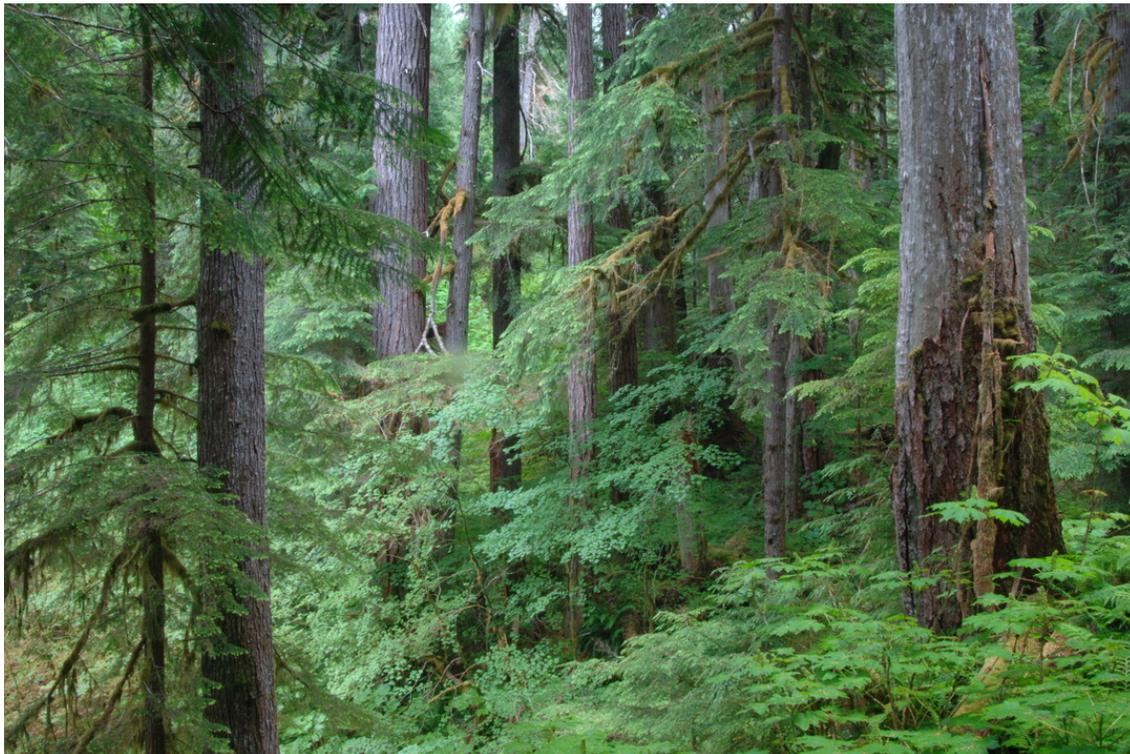
The WGC grant will allow Dr. Law to rank forests within each ecological region of Oregon according to their capacity for carbon storage and biodiversity. Further, the research will help us identify the potential for protection on different forest ownerships, including public, private and tribal.

“We are pushing ecosystems to the point where they may not recover unless we take aggressive actions to reduce atmospheric greenhouse gases and protect plants and animals and the rich natural reservoirs of carbon,” Law said.

Dr. Law’s 30 years of research includes the effects of climate, wildfire and management on forest carbon and water processes, forest carbon accounting, and land-use strategies to mitigate climate change and protect biodiversity. She has over 250 refereed journal articles and reports. Her work has been recognized in the top 1% for most citations globally in the past decade. She is also a fellow of the American Geophysical Union and the Earth Leadership Program.

“We are immensely grateful for Roger’s vision and support,” said Dr. Law. “The gift will allow us to focus on natural climate solutions that increase the carbon reservoirs in forests while protecting biodiversity and drinking water in the region.”

To find out more about the Worthy Garden Club’s efforts addressing biodiversity and climate change issues, contact Dr. Rick Martinson, Executive Director at 541-639-4776 ext. 221 or Rick@worthygardenclub.com.



Oregon's mature forests capture and store significant volumes of carbon dioxide, helping to mitigate the effects of climate change. In addition, these dense, multi-storied forests provide outstanding habitat values, biodiversity, and protect water quality for all residents of the state. Photo credit: Oregon State University



Timber harvests release significant amounts of carbon, destroy soil structure, create erosion, and destroy wildlife habitat. The amount of carbon released through timber harvesting has been shown to exceed all other sources, including agriculture and transportation, contributing to rapid climate change. Photo credit: OregonWild