



August 6, 2012

JOHN A. KITZHABER, MD
Governor

Mike McArthur
Executive Director
Association of Oregon Counties
1201 Court St. NE, Suite 300
Salem, OR 97309

Dear Mr. McArthur:


Thank you for your request to designate the current ad hoc Juniper Planning Group as an Oregon Solutions effort. The Oregon Solutions approach will enable the group to build on and expand the results of the ad hoc Juniper Planning Group by providing a high level, neutral forum to support a collaborative approach to the utilization of juniper from restoration projects.

To that end, by this letter I am designating the Western Juniper Utilization Group an Oregon Solutions project and appointing *Tom Kelly and Martin Goebel* as the co-conveners. They will lead a team of state and local government, federal agencies, tribes, private businesses and environmental groups in continuing to identify opportunities and leverage investments to unlock the potential of rangeland restoration and juniper harvested from public and private lands. I am also asking the Association of Oregon Counties to serve as a liaison between the Western Juniper Utilization Group and the Sage Grouse Conservation Partnership (SageCon) effort, which is also staffed by Oregon Solutions.

Juniper treatment is a key component of rangeland and sage grouse habitat restoration. This restoration work has tremendous potential to create jobs, provide new economic opportunities to the timber and wood products industries throughout Oregon, and provide another sustainable resource for biomass energy-related uses. Expanded job opportunities related to utilization of juniper beyond the initial work created by the restoration projects themselves merits greater attention.

I look forward to remaining updated on the expected outcomes of this project, which includes developing a work plan and related funding strategy for the Western Juniper Utilization Group. Thank you for your work and enthusiasm towards this effort.

Sincerely,



John A. Kitzhaber, M.D.
Governor

cc: Greg Wolf, Governor's Intergovernmental/ Regional Solutions Director
Richard Whitman, Governor's Natural Resource Director
Brett Brownscombe, Governor's Natural Resource Advisor
Scott Fairley, Governor's Eastern Oregon Regional Coordinator
Annette Liebe, Governor's Central Oregon Regional Coordinator
Bev Stein, Oregon Solutions