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in our state?

J.G.: There is. The biggest one is way down south in Central Oregon near the border. There are a couple large scale ones, and there's a lot of interest from some foresters in becoming bigger operations that are FSC certified.

We decided to pay a lot of attention to cross-laminated timber and its potential to be a better product because D.R. Johnson (Lumber Co.), the sole producer of cross-laminated timber in the state of Oregon that's certified to have their wood used in tall buildings – they have an FSC branch.

A lot of operators in the state, on the production side – the mills and the producers – for a lot of them to convert to an FSC facility could be challenging with our current laws and incentives. Oregon should offer better incentives to families and companies that want to do better, not punish them for it.

In this particular instance, we actually have a pretty good opportunity to really push this industry and say, here's a product that you could be doing better with and the manufacturer is right there with the ability to have this branch of their operation produce a stewardship certified product. With the cross-laminated timber, we can efficiently see a better product being used in Portland buildings on a pretty rapid timeline.

E.G.: What's the difference between an FSC-certified forest and a typical industrial forest?

J.G.: It's not as big as I'd like it to be. The reality is FSC certification is lacking in a lot of ways. There's a lot of reasons to suggest it could be much better, and so for us, it's an opportunity for us to say, look, this isn't perfect, but it's better than what's going on in a lot of places. But what it does mean is much less use of chemicals and aerial spray, much less frequency of clear-cutting, and much more support for things like water protections, large riparian buffers, smaller clear-cut openings and diversification as you're planting, so we're not just keeping more and more of our forests in this state of monocrop tree farming.



PHOTO COURTESY OF OREGON WILD/LAMAR ADVERTISING

A MAX train features Oregon Wild's advertising campaign "Welcome to Oregon, Home of the Clear-Cut."

E.G.: The ad on the MAX train prominently displays a Web address, ClearCutOregon.com. What will people find at that website?

J.G.: People will find more images of clear cuts and clear-cut streams, of clear-cut communities. They'll find memes and shareables that they can use to help us spread the word on social media, a lot of facts and figures about what's going on with clear-cutting in Oregon, and links to other websites where you can hear the stories of Oregonians who've been negatively impacted by clear-cutting and aerial spraying, such as the Rockaway citizens in Rockaway Beach with the Jetty Creek situation, and all up and down the coast and Coast Range.

They can also find stories from the good folks at Hyla Woods and other foresters that are really trying to do a better job, so that we can really give them the opportunity to also say, look, we're not anti-logging here; we are really pro better logging.

E.G.: How can people get involved if they want do something about this?

J.G.: We will have a petition for people to take action (at ClearCutOregon.com). We're looking at putting printable postcards (on the website) so people can have their own postcard-writing parties with their friends and family, and send their concerns by mail to Oregon's elected officials and their representatives. They will learn how to contact me and other organizers in the state that will help them organize in their own communities.

E.G.: Oregon Wild's ad will be going by the Oregon Convention Center on a MAX train when certain events are taking place there. Can you tell me a little more about that?

J.G.: Coming up in the middle of March, we have the Mass Timber Conference at the Oregon Convention Center. This is a convention that draws elected officials and decision-makers from all over the region. There will be a lot of people with a lot of power there, but it also attracts a lot of architects and designers who want to be doing good things in their community with sustainable green building, and it will also attract a lot of people from within the industry who may really believe what they're doing now is the best way – so we think this is a great opportunity to expose them to our side of the story and our messaging.

E.G.: Are there any other issues behind the campaign?

J.G.: In this portion of the campaign, which is very Portland centric, it's really easy for logging corporations to point a finger at a group like Oregon Wild and say, "These city-based environmentalists don't know what they're talking about."

But this campaign is really driven by rural Oregon. One of the things that people will find on ClearCutOregon.com is links that will take them to another website that we work on called Oregon Forest Voices (OregonForestVoices.org), which features the stories of people whose lead we are following on this campaign.

For Oregon Wild, I am the person who works on these issues, and most of my work

and my life are based in rural Oregon logging communities. I work with people whose families have been logging for generations. I work in towns where the entire modern history is tied to logging and the cultural heritage is closely tied to logging. Everywhere I go, I find these people are the most concerned about clear-cut logging and aerial spray.

What's funny is we felt the need to run this campaign in Portland because when I'm on the Oregon Coast in these logging towns with folks who are living out in industrial forest lands, they're very concerned about clear-cutting and aerial spray, and it's on their mind every day to fight it. But this is something our population centers have really stopped paying attention to, so this is an opportunity for us to remind those folks in the city that it's actually rural Oregon whose water needs to be protected.

Portland and Eugene have great water sources that come from well-protected forests. Rural Oregon is literally running out of drinking water due to clear-cutting and aerial spray. Everywhere I go out in rural Oregon, I find people who are worried about the impacts of industrial logging on their drinking water, on their favorite fishing holes, and on their community and their community economies as well.

One of the things I run into out there is a lot of support for our work from businesses that either rely on tourism or recreational fishing to pay the bills. These are the Oregon Coast's biggest industries at this point, and these industries are all directly threatened by the status quo with industrial clear-cutting.

It's really easy for Portland-based lobbyist firms that work for these clear-cutting corporations from Wall Street to say, "We can't have more regulations that would hurt rural Oregon." It's really easy for them to say that from high-rises in downtown Portland, but when you actually go out into rural Oregon, what I find is people that are looking for a new way forward, that are looking for an economy of tomorrow and not yesterday, and who are really looking to protect their watersheds.

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Print answer here

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