

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

February 24, 1999 Hearing Room 50

4:30 P.M. Tapes 53 - 54

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sen. Gary George, Chair

Sen. Thomas Wilde, Vice-Chair

Sen. Tony Corcoran

Sen. Joan Dukes

Sen. Ted Ferrioli

Sen. Bill Fisher

MEMBER EXCUSED:

STAFF PRESENT: Brad Harper, Administrator

Kristal Hatton-Nease, Administrative Support

ISSUE/MEASURES HEARD: SB 233 Work Session

Oregon Department of Forestry

Swiss Needle Cast Presentation

These minutes are in compliance with Senate and House Rules. Only text enclosed in quotation marks reports a speaker's exact words. For complete contents, please refer to the tapes.

TAPE/#	Speaker	Comments
TAPE 53, A		
007	Chair George	Convenes meeting at 5:16 p.m. Opens work session on SB 233.
<u>SB 233 WORK SESSION</u>		

016	Chuck Craig	Assistant Director, Oregon Department of Agriculture. Submits ñ1 amendments. [EXHIBIT A] Discusses substantive changes in the ñ1 amendments.
035	Sen. Wilde	Says he would like to establish legislative intent in regards to lines 3 and 4. Asks if the section simply means the notification of health and environmental agencies and that it does not give them any jurisdictional rights or ability to delay.
040	Craig	Says that is correct and says the determination to proceed would be the decision of the State Veterinarian. States the department does not want to over look anything that is important.
050	Sen. Fisher	MOTION: Moves to ADOPT SB 233-1 amendments dated 2/23/99.
		VOTE: 6-0
		Chair George
		Hearing no objection, declares the motion CARRIED.
060	Sen. Wilde	MOTION: Moves SB 233 to the floor with a DO PASS AS AMENDED recommendation.
		VOTE: 6-0
		Chair George
		Hearing no objection, declares the motion CARRIED.
		SEN. WILDE will lead discussion on the floor.
068	Chair George	Closes work session on SB 233. Opens informational meeting on the status of the Swiss Needle Cast in western Oregon.
<u>Oregon Department of Forestry</u>		
075	Alan Kanaskie	Oregon Department of Forestry. Submits [EXHIBIT B] and conducts a slide presentation on the status of the Swiss Needle Cast in western Oregon. Says Swiss Needle Cast is a disease of Douglas fir foliage caused by the fungus <i>Phaeocryptopus Gaeumannii</i> .
125	Kanaskie	Says Swiss Needle Cast has caused damage throughout the range of Douglas fir and, until the past several years, has been considered unimportant. Says that since the late 1980s Swiss Needle Cast has become increasingly severe in plantations and in naturally established stands, particularly along the north coast of Oregon.
175	Kanaskie	Explains the extent of damage caused by the Swiss Needle Cast disease. Says for the past three years, aerial surveys of the Coast range have shown dramatic

		increase in the area of Douglas-fir forest with obvious symptoms of Swiss Needle Cast.
197	Sen. Fisher	Asks how Swiss Needle affects the wood of the Douglas-fir tree.
202	Kanaskie	Replies the wood is altered considerably when it has Swiss Needle Cast disease. Explains the wood density increase and the proportion of early wood to late wood changes.
214	Sen. Corcoran	Asks if the fungus exists everywhere and is active only in certain stands.
216	Kanaskie	Says it does exist everywhere and sometimes affects Douglas fir and sometimes it doesn't. Continues testimony on the results of the growth impact assessment. Says the Swiss Needle Cast disease rarely causes mortality but often reduces tree growth and in turn decreases Douglas fir yields.
266	Kanaskie	Discusses the distribution of plantation acreage by foliage retention class. Adds Swiss Needle Cast disease affects about a million acres in the Coast Range. Explains several hypotheses that have been suggested to explain why this pathogen is causing severe damage to Douglas Fir in its native range.
301	Chair George	Asks if there more of a problem with Swiss Needle Cast in Christmas tree farms.
305	Kanaskie	Responds the first Cast of Swiss Needle Cast occurred in a Christmas tree farm. Continues testimony on why Swiss Needle Cast is causing severe damage. Discusses current forest management recommendations, which include establishing new plantations and managing existing plantations.
355	Kanaskie	Discusses the Swiss Needle Cast cooperative. Says it consists of four groups of organizations: Oregon State University, Oregon Department of Forestry, private industry members, and various U.S. government agencies. Adds the Swiss Needle Cast cooperative is primarily dominated by the industry.
391	Sen. Fisher	Asks if the lack of fire, which allows the undergrowth of forests to grow, impacts the Swiss Needle Cast disease.
398	Kanaskie	Replies no and says most of the damage by the Swiss Needle Cast occurs in the Coast range. Says it is not linked to the kinds of practices Sen. Fisher discussed.
424	Sen. Corcoran	Asks if Kanaskie can put this problem into context with other tree diseases in Oregon and their impact on other tree species.
430	Kanaskie	Responds there has been a tremendous loss of tree profits because of the Swiss Needle Cast disease.

455	Sen. Corcoran	Asks what other diseases are impacting Oregon trees.
TAPE 54, A		
002	Kanaskie	Replies there are bark beetles that are causing a lot of problems in eastern Oregon. Adds that others such as mountain pine beetles and spruce bug worm are causing problems in Oregon forests. Adds eastern Oregon is in a period of relative calm.
019	Chair George	Comments on the outbreak of phomopsis several years ago. Says that the disease basically took the tops out of trees. Asks if there is any relation between different diseases.
022	Kanaskie	Explains secondary pests have been expected to start increasing in the Coast range.
037	Chair George	Gives personal comment on what he saw when looking at Swiss Needle Cast damage in the Coast Range.
052	Kanaskie	Says it is impossible to overstate the impact of Swiss Needle disease damage.
060	Sen. Fisher	Asks if Swiss Needle Cast continues on the eastern slopes of Coast range.
068	Kanaskie	Says 90% of the damage is on the west slope of the Coast Range. Says the Cascade Range observations are fairly recent and Swiss Needle is not considered as much of a problem.
089	John Washburn	Simpson Timber Company. Gives information on Simpson Timber Company. Shows tree limb that has been attacked by the Swiss Needle Cast disease. Says this is a very serious problem.
110	Mark Riley	Forester, Starker Forest. Gives information on Starker Forest, which is located in Corvallis, Oregon. Says that in the last three years Swiss Needle Cast has begun to affect Starker Forest trees. Says private companies in the Coast Range are very concerned about this disease. Comments this disease creates lost investment for companies. Comments on a package before the legislature to give \$400,000 for the next biennium to Swiss Needle Cast research.
150	Chair George	Comments on the reforestation of mountains around the Kings Valley area. Asks if there have been any problems with that tree stand.
159	Riley	Explains there have been problems with tree stands in the Kings Valley area. Says that in the past several years foresters have seen symptoms of Swiss Needle Cast disease.

169	Sen. Fisher	Asks what the year average is of the limbs the witnesses brought.
172	Washburn	Answers one limb has one yearsí Needles and represents a 60% Needle reduction.
176	Riley	Says traditional management practices (better weed control, thinning, fertilization) have not seemed to work.
188	Chair George	Comments on some damage done to trees on his farm. Says he thought damage to his trees was the result of using herbicides but has noticed that trees outside areas, where herbicides are used, look the same. Asks if this disease is affecting Douglas fir seedlings.
201	Washburn	Says that Swiss Needle Cast is affecting Douglas fir seedlings.
211	Chair George	Asks why some trees have a good resistance to disease, such as to the Swiss Needle Cast, and why other trees die.
221	Washburn	Comments no one knows the genetic strain of Swiss Needle Cast. Adds each tree has a different genetic structure.
231	Chair George	Asks if a resistance strain for each zone would need to be made since each stand is different. Asks if the cooperative has worked with fungicides to see if they help the Swiss Needle Cast disease.
236	Washburn	Replies fungicides have not been successful.
244	Riley	Comments most of the research is trying to focus on the basic biology of the Swiss Needle Cast.
249	Chair George	Asks if this is basically a non-chemical attack on the pathogen.
250	Washburn	Replies the research group is looking for a weak link of the disease.
256	Greg Phillip	Associate Professor, Oregon State University and Director, Swiss Needle Cast Cooperative. Comments on the research of the Swiss Needle Cast disease. Says there are a number of possible solutions, which include chemicals and vegetation control.
278	Sen. Corcoran	Asks if there is a strategy to encourage the Department of Forestry and private nurseries to grow such fungus.
287	Washburn	Replies that would cost about \$700 per acre.

296	Phillip	Says Washburn has been destroying Douglas fir and replanting hemlock. Says some foresters think it is better to get rid of disease infested Douglas fir and start over with a new species of tree.
300	Washburn	Adds he is doing 10,000 acres of interplanting of young Douglas fir stands between the fall of 1998 and the fall of 1999. Says this will establish secondary species on the site. Adds that still leaves 50,000 acres in a very bad shape.
313	Sen. Fisher	Asks how Swiss Needle Cast disease spreads.
316	Washburn	Replies the cooperative is studying that and is concentrating on the spread of the disease by wind travel and the way the Swiss Needle Cast disease builds up in stand over a period of years. Adds Swiss Needle Cast appears to intensify the longer it is in a stand.
345	Riley	Comments on 10-year-old stands and the fact that a person can not physically walk through them. Says the forest may need to burn or clean out the old stand some other way.
370	Sen. Corcoran	Comments there should money given for the research of the Swiss Needle Cast disease.
373	Chair George	Adjourns meeting at 6:10 p.m.

Submitted By, Reviewed By,

Kristal Hatton-Nease, Brad Harper,
Administrative Support Administrator

EXHIBIT SUMMARY

A ñ SB 233, -1 amendments, Staff, 1 p.

B ñ Written testimony on Swiss Needle Cast, Alan Kanaskie, 6 pp.

C ñ Written testimony on SB 233, Glen Stonebrink, 1 p.