

# ARE LANDSLIDES AND FORESTRY RELATED ?

Landslides are a natural geologic process and are closely associated with heavy rainfall and/or rapid snowmelt. In high natural-risk areas (such as steep slopes), the incidence of shallow, rapidly moving landslides can be accelerated in the near term by road construction or clearcuts. However, they can occur in any high-risk area whether or not there is human activity. The incidence and severity of landslides are about the same in mature forest stands over 100 years old as they are in newly-harvested areas.

## GOOD AND BAD FOR FISH

Near term, fine sediment from landslides entering a stream can suffocate fish eggs and young fry. However, long term, logs and coarse gravels delivered to streams from landslides are necessary to create future spawning beds as well as pools for rearing habitat.

## REFORESTATION MINIMIZES RISKS

Timely reforestation is required after timber harvest. This reduces landslide risk over time by shortening the period that trees are not occupying the land.

## SPECIAL RULES FOR STEEP TERRAIN

There are special forest practices rules for road construction and harvesting on high-risk landslide hazard locations. If public safety is at substantial risk, harvest and road construction are prohibited. When roads are built on steep slopes, soil and rock must be hauled away to avoid triggering a landslide.

**Prompt reforestation reduces the risk of landslide over time.**

Oregon's Legislature created the Oregon Forest Resources Institute to improve public understanding of Oregon's forest resources and to encourage sound forest practices



## BIG OREGON STORMS

A study was conducted of the relationship between forest practices and landslides after a series of intense storms and floods in 1996. It concluded:

- There is significant landslide risk on very steep slopes regardless of forest age.
- For 10 years after a clearcut harvest, risk of landslide occurrence increases an average of 40%.
- Young forests (age 10-100 years) typically have fewer landslides per square mile than mature forest stands.
- Landslides from recently clearcut forests and older, mature forests have similar depth and volume.



Learn more at [www.oregonforests.org](http://www.oregonforests.org)