

October 8, 2007

Dear Bureau of Land Management,

I am an Oregonian who is currently in graduate school in North Carolina at Duke University, hence I am a transplanted Oregonian. I grew up in Eugene, OR, and went to Oregon State University.

I am writing to comment on the proposed Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Western Oregon Plan Revision. I have reviewed the EIS and my comments are below.

I strongly support the No Action option. This alternative balances the needs of Western Oregon logging communities to increase the timber harvest while balancing the needs of other Oregonians and the ecology of Western Oregon forests. Let me be more specific. I support the No Action Plan because:

1. It provides good alternatives for developing mature forest stands with complex structure helping to return forest composition of stand age and type to what it was historically 100 years ago (and to reduce risk of severe fire),
2. It has the least risk of imperiling the native species in these forests,
3. It has the least risk of increasing the risk of invasion by non-native species at in part because it protects riparian areas more heavily from disturbance,
4. It does the most to protect the wildlife of these forests including providing better habitat alternatives for the Marbled Murrelet and the Northern Spotted Owl,
5. It protects twice the acreage in riparian management areas, which as a wetland ecologist is a high priority of mine given how important wetlands are in landscape processing sediments, nutrients, and controlling hydrological flows,
6. It has the largest decreases the fire severity threats to both the Southern and Northern areas, including the Eugene area,
7. It protects all the areas that have been identified as "Areas of Critical Concern" while the other plans do not do this and hence, put some of these areas at risk.

I realize it is important for the counties of Western Oregon to have a revenue source from these forests and the No Action plan does provide some revenue options for these communities. However, I believe it is impossible to return to historic levels of funding these communities based on timber with the multi-faceted goals we have now for our forests. Forests provide many ecosystem services that are not given an economic value when trees are considered simply as potential lumber. In order to protect the communities in both the southern and northern parts of western Oregon from fire, it is important that the forests be managed to increase fire resiliency which is what the No Action plan does best. These forests also need to provide key habitat for fish, plants, and animals, especially riparian habitat, and the No Action plan is the best one for achieving these goals.

Thus, I conclude that I strongly support the No Action Plan. Alternative 1 is the most similar to the No Action Plan, so I also partially support Alternative 1. I strongly oppose

Alternative 3 which opens a great deal of land to logging and very inadequately protects habitat, wildlife, riparian areas, or the local communities from the risk of fire. I also do not support Alternative 2 for similar reasons.

Thank you for considering my comments. I plan to return to Oregon once I finish my education, so the decision made about Oregon forests and communities are of great concern to me.

Sincerely,

*Ariana Sutton-Grier*

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