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Eugene, OR 97405  
January 5, 2008

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Oregon State Office  
Bureau of Land Management  
333 S.W. 1st Avenue  
Portland, OR 97204

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Dear Sirs,

We would like to submit this commentary on the Western Oregon Plan Revisions. To revise or scrap the Northwest Forest Plan and make industrial timber production the main objective in managing the public lands is retrogressive. All your proposed Alternative Revisions except #1 completely ignore the growing evidence that the preservation of what little remains of our natural forests and the protection of the integrity of our stream sides and watersheds, should be the most important goal of forest management. Old forests are huge carbon sinks. To log them is to add to our planet's carbon burden. It would be better for the BLM to protect its forests and sell that protection as carbon credits than to sell the timber for the purported [and very short term] benefit of the rural counties.

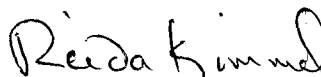
Biological diversity is key mark of a healthy ecosystem. Old growth forests are the most diverse woodland systems, and the web of species that maintain the forest health, from the bacteria, soil insects and mycelium beneath the earth, to the mosses, lichens, voles, squirrels, and birds that we can actually see, all play a part in maintaining a forest's healthy lifecycle. No second or third growth forest is so diverse. No amount of fertilizer can reproduce the biological richness of an intact ecosystem. The BLM's remaining unlogged woodlands are a treasure house, a refugia. In future years as young forests mature on previously logged sites, species that have remained in the old growth may migrate to the younger forests and repair the broken web of life processes. It is not enough to save a few token old growth forests for they will become isolated and suffer species extinction. Instead the BLM should look at the whole of the Northwest forest, treat it as an interconnected web, preserve all of that which is old and concentrate on thinning overcrowded second and third growth forests.

At a time when so much effort is being placed on trying to restore salmon runs and healthy riparian zones, it is inconceivable the BLM should consider reducing the no-cut zone beside streams. Given the warming climate, and the increasing intensity of droughts and mega storm events, the BLM should be enhancing, not reducing its protection of watersheds and wetlands. If streams are to run clear and cool, they must have deep zones of protection, hundreds of meters wide, where the trees, vegetation, and soil are undisturbed.

For many years we have received notifications of BLM projects in western Oregon, for the McKenzie and Siuslaw River Districts. We have been generally pleased that the BLM was taking a progressive stand in managing many of these lands, pursuing thinning, road closures, and riparian habitat restoration. The WOPR proposals are a terrible step backwards to an era of cut and run timber management and we are appalled. The only viable alternative for BLM action is 'no action', Alternative 1 at the very least. To abide by the Northwest Forest plan, leave the natural forests intact, and concentrate on improving the health of its many thousands of acres of neglected young and middle-aged trees.

Very truly yours,

  
Charles Kimmel



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c.c. Governor Ted Kulongowski  
Senator Ron Wyden,  
Senator Gorgon Smith  
Representative Peter DeFazio