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January 9, 2008

Mr. Edward W. Shepard, State Director
U.S. Dept. of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Western Oregon Plan Revisions
PO Box 2965
Portland, OR 97208

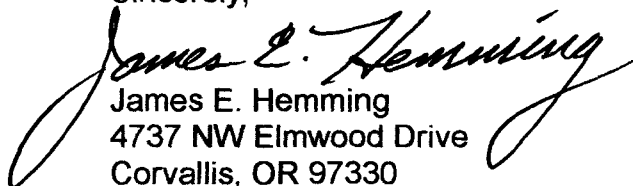
Dear Mr. Shepard:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the DEIS for the proposed WOPR. I am an avid fisherman and retired biologist. In 1971, I was hired by the Department of the Interior as a senior environmental advisor during the construction of the Trans Alaska Oil Pipeline. The government stipulations for that project required a 200 ft undisturbed buffer along all streams affected by the project. The standard was applied in all cases and it worked well; harm to riparian and aquatic habitats was avoided or greatly minimized. Today, you can visit any of those pristine streams and rivers in Alaska and you will find that the fish populations there are as healthy as they were prior to construction of the pipeline.

I have reviewed the references for the WOPR DEIS and can find no justification for reducing stream buffers to 25 ft. Please don't try to fix something that is not broken. There may even be cases where buffers of greater than 300 ft may be needed to protect portions of critical watersheds. I strongly urge you to maintain a minimum stream buffer standard of 200 ft, with an option for an increase where justified, to assure the viability of resident and anadromous fish streams in Oregon. A few dollars in timber income is not worth losing the viability of our anadromous and resident fish.

I strongly recommend that the BLM reject the Preferred Alternative and adopt the No Action Alternative. Please let me know what action you take on this matter.

Sincerely,


James E. Hemming
4737 NW Elmwood Drive
Corvallis, OR 97330

cc: Senator Ron Wyden
Senator Gordon Smith
Representative Peter de Fazio
Representative Diane Hooley