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

December 12, 2007

Dear BLM Superintendent,

I am writing to register my concern with the direction the management of nearly 2.6 million acres of federal forests under the Western Oregon Plan Revisions. The changes the Bureau of Land Management is contemplating will unravel the protections of the landmark Northwest Forest Plan, and will lead to water pollution, degraded habitat, and increased conflict and controversy.

Although I am writing as a concerned citizen, I do have professional experience in land and resource management planning. I am an archaeologist with more than 30 years experience, and was employed by the Forest Service for many years, including time on the Tongass, Ochoco, and Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forests.

I am upset to learn that most of our best old-growth BLM forests have been placed in "Timber Management Areas" to be clear-cut every 80 years. The preferred alternative proposes to clearcut 110,000 acres of Oregon's old-growth (120+ years) and build 1,000 mile of new logging roads every decade while creating over 100,000 miles of new Off Highway Vehicle Emphasis Areas all at the expense of roadless areas, threatened species, water quality and non-motorized recreation. I am also extremely disappointed that with all the attention that climate change has received over the past few years, the proposal ignores the role that these forests play in regulating the climate.

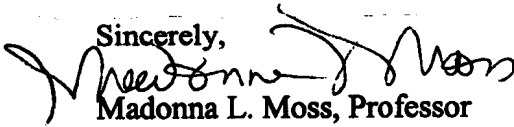
It is a good idea to thin second growth forests in order to safeguard communities from wildfire and protect what remains of our nation's ancient forests. I am glad to see that many Oregon forest managers are moving beyond the conflicts of the past, by focusing on previously logged public forestlands. These forests provide wood to local mills and the thinning can improve conditions for fish and wildlife, at the same time, protecting old-growth forests.

Instead, the WOPR proposes to inflame the controversies of the past by increasing old-growth clear-cutting for a short-term economic fix. The WOPR puts water quality at risk and would destroy some of Oregon's most special places. We should protect our remaining mature and old-growth forests on public land, not clearcut these natural treasures. I also know that increasing clear-cutting will increase the use of the aerial spraying of herbicides. This is of deep concern to me because of its adverse effects throughout our ecosystem.

It is disappointing that at a time when public consensus for old-growth protection and second-growth thinning has never been stronger, the BLM is proposing to clear-cut forests older than our nation and turn complex ecosystems into tree plantations most susceptible to severe wildfire. Please protect remaining old-growth forests, focus active management of BLM lands in already logged-over areas, and create job opportunities in restoration thinning projects that benefit watersheds and generate wood products without multiplying past mistakes.

I know that the Bush Administration has placed many federal agencies in the hands of political appointees, not professional foresters and resource managers. I hope you will refrain from giving in to the political whims of this administration, after all, we will have a new administration in Washington in just over one year. Please do what is best for the long term health of the forests and of the planet.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Madonna L. Moss". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Madonna L. Moss, Professor  
Department of Anthropology  
University of Oregon