



*Protecting Our Natural Heritage
From the Coast to the Cascades*

P.O. Box 5347 • Eugene, OR 97405 • (541) ⁷⁴¹⁻³⁶²⁵~~935-2795~~ • www.landwatch.net

2508
RECEIVED
JAN 11 2008

7 January 2008

Edward W. Shepard, State Director
United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Western Oregon Plan Revisions
P.O. Box 29
Portland, OR 97208

Re: Western Oregon Plan Revisions

Dear Mr. Shepard:

Alternative 2 proposes an incredible and unconscionable seven-fold increase in old-growth clearcutting (58,000 acres of old-growth cut in the first ten years) that will exacerbate environmental problems long contributing to global warming. Over 1,000 miles of new logging roads and 140,000 acres of clearcuts in the first decade alone would scar Oregon's spectacular landscape.

Alternative 2's substantial reduction in old-growth reserves will negatively impact older-forest-dependent species, reduce protections for wildlife populations and diminish habitat for countless plant and wildlife species.

The plan to reduce stream buffers by as much as 75% is simply insupportable. Narrowed stream buffers, and clearcuts closer to streams will degrade water quality and further threaten endangered aquatic creatures that are already suffering from habitat degradation. By allowing logging near streams, Alternative 2 would reduce important protections for clean water and Pacific salmon. Salmon need cool, clean water, but the WOPR would remove stream buffers that shade streams and keep sediment from the water. High quality drinking water originates on BLM lands for the citizens of Salem, Corvallis, Eugene, and 70 other Oregon communities and should be protected by expanded, not reduced, riparian buffers.

The proposed increase in old-growth logging will convert fire-resilient old forests into dense young forests that are prone to high severity fire. This would elevate the threat of catastrophic fire not only to the forests but to nearby communities, single dwellings, and the people, animals and plants that live in the vicinity.

We urge the BLM to adopt the Community-Conservation Alternative proposed by the Oregon Forest Heritage consortium because it fits the realities of the early 21st century Oregon economy

and offers an antidote to global warming ,water depletion and pollution and threats to endangered species, including our own. This alternative provides for:

1. Protecting all the remaining mature and old-growth forests on federal land;
2. Shifting the agency's efforts toward ecological restoration of forests and watersheds; and
3. Achieving social and economic objectives through forest restoration activities.

The Community-Conservation Alternative also meets the agency's goal of simplifying project planning and reducing costs because, in most cases, surveys for species associated with old forests would be unnecessary, and pursuing less controversial projects (e.g. restoration projects to help the forest and streams, rather than clearcutting them) would lead to public support for BLM management.

As private citizens and board members of LandWatch Lane County, we urge you to eliminate the WOPR Alternative 2 and adopt the Community-Conservation Alternative.

Sincerely,

Robert Emmons

Nena Lovinger

Robert Emmons and Nena Lovinger
40093 Little Fall Creek Road
Fall Creek, OR 97438

