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OREGON MACHINISTS' COUNCIL

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State Director's Office

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RECEIVED
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Edward W. Shepard
OR/WA State Director
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 2965
Portland, OR 97208

Re: Western Oregon Plan Revisions

Dear Mr. Shepard:

On behalf of the Oregon Machinists Council, I am writing in response to your request for public comment on the Bureau of Land Management's draft Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) for future management of 2.5 million acres of public lands in Western Oregon.

It has now been more than 10 years since the Northwest Forest Plan was first approved and we believe that it is long past time to review the current resource management plans and correct some of the flaws they have. Upon review of the alternatives, the Oregon Machinists Council endorses Alternative 2 because it is the one most in line with the Oregon & California Lands Act of 1937 that requires the BLM to manage these lands for permanent forest production, while providing economic benefit to local communities and ensuring watershed health. As you note in your fact sheet, Alternative 2 would generate an additional 3,442 timber related jobs, many of which will likely be filled by unionized employees, and generate more than $2 billion in revenue over a ten year period. We believe this plan goes a long way to meet the as-of-yet unmet production side goals of the Northwest Forest Plan and would provide economic benefit to the rural communities in the 18 counties that have long been denied a predictable and sustainable flow of timber to mills.

At the same time, the Council believes that the net impact of Alternative 2 on the environment is relatively minimal. In order to increase production to the level specified in Alternative 2, there will have to be some impact, but we believe that that the BLM has taken the necessary steps to make it minimal. Moreover, we support Alternative 2 because it also contains language that matches the map in Option 2 of the Recovery Plan and the draft Proposed Critical Habitat for the northern spotted owl.

It is for these reasons that we, again, support Alternative 2 and urge its selection by the BLM.

Sincerely,

Robert C. Petroff

ROBERT C. PETROFF
President

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