

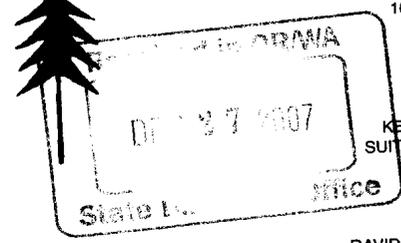
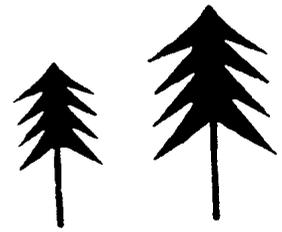
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December 26, 2007

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Senator Gordon Smith
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Representative Earl Blumenauer
2446 Rayburn House Office Building
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Representative David Wu
1023 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: O&C County Comments on BLM Draft EIS

Dear Members of Oregon's Congressional Delegation:

Enclosed are comments submitted by the Association of O&C Counties in response to the draft EIS prepared in the BLM's Western Oregon Plan Revision ("WOPR") process. As you will see from the comments, the United States Supreme Court has issued an opinion limiting the scope of the Endangered Species Act in a way that has substantial, practical implications for the BLM's management of the O&C lands.

As you are well aware, the O&C lands are managed pursuant to federal statutes that have no application to most federal forest lands. We hope that you will take this opportunity to recall that, unlike the National Forests, the O&C lands are dedicated by law to sustained yield timber production. The O&C lands are mostly isolated small tracts interspersed with privately owned lands, unlike the vast and contiguous National Forest

lands. And most importantly, shared revenue from O&C lands is paid directly to Counties to be used in their general funds in any way their local priorities require, from libraries to law enforcement, public health programs and more. Shared revenues from National Forest lands are restricted for use only on road systems and for schools. There are profound differences between the O&C lands and the National Forests, and these differences warrant the kind of management proposed in the enclosed comments submitted to the BLM by this Association.

As you are also well aware, the "Secure Rural Schools" safety net has ended. We very much appreciate your ongoing efforts to extend the safety net. We also understand that currently proposed legislation would gain us four or five years at the most while ramping down each year. This inevitable decline and loss of the safety net makes shared timber receipts a certain and critical component of future County budgets. This issue is so important that the Counties request that you designate a senior staff person to address the BLM WOPR process over the course of the coming year. Please notify us as soon as possible of who you appoint as your contact person, so that we can follow up and schedule meetings to discuss the BLM's proposed management plans.

Thank you for your help. Please call any time if you have questions. We look forward to working with you on this important issue.

Very truly yours,



Rocky McVay
Executive Director

cc: Mr. Ed Shepard (w/o encl.) ✓