

1632

January 2, 2008

RECEIVED
JAN 07 2008

Karl Krauskopf
P.O. Box 214
Jacksonville, Oregon 97520

Bureau of Land Management
Western Oregon Plan Revisions
P. O. Box 2965
Portland, Oregon

Regarding: the Western Oregon Plan Revisions

Gentlemen, Ladies:

Birthered in 1937, the Oregon and California Lands Act was enacted into law in an era that found the majority voice of those who had at least some awareness of the Western forests, flora and wildlife chorused truths such as "We will never run out of trees" and "Forests are self-sustaining beyond the foreseeable future." Save for a few forward-thinking groups, the American public of 1937 saw the extensive forests of the Western states as an unlimited resource ready to be harvested with the advantage that, once harvested, the land would of its own create more of this bounty to be exploited a few years down the road with no end in sight to the cycle. The vigorous taking of trees from these forests was, at the time, seen as a natural "use it or lose it" paradigm.

In the sixth decade of the twentieth century, however, it became apparent that the lumber harvest was out-pacing nature's willingness to repair its losses, and man's activities were slowed, not through concern for the health of the forests, but from the increasing scarcity of suitable product. In the span of some thirty years since the time of the enactment of O and C we brought our vast Western forests to the point of not being able to supply our hunger for its lumber.

The tenets of the Oregon and California Lands Act derive from a time in our brief history as inhabitants of these lands whose truths seventy years later are no longer compatible with our current experience. Today one view is—or should be—more global rather than territorial. We of the northern hemisphere decry the desecration of the world's forests lands, harvested so that food crops can be grown. We react with frustration and disbelief that peoples distant from us would so thoughtlessly remove from the planet vast tracts of heretofore undisturbed forests, thereby possibly condemning to extinction unknown varieties of life.

With our experience of managing forested lands and its wildlife denizens as well as the accompanying research of appropriate methods of performing these tasks, are we not—these seventy years later— able to formulate a better doctrine of management than that promulgated by the O and C act? Have we not yet seen or realized that our forests are part of a global community that sustain our own human lives as well as those of all other living things? Have we not seen or realized that in the harvesting of trees and returning nothing save the planting of new crops that our second growth is not as

dynamic or as health as the one we harvested? Are we not aware that our harvesting activities cannot but negatively affect the animal populations that depend on large areas of long-term forests for their livelihood and even existence?

The Western Oregon Plan Revisions draws its reason for being from a seventy-year old act which purports to mandate timber production above all other activities on O and C lands for the partial purpose of providing jobs and revenue to the residents of these areas. While the Revisions do address these and other issues such as the protection of wildlife and the support of recreation, they do not address the larger issues of global impacts of the harvests, of the dislocation, diminution or elimination of animal species, or of the true nature of managing forests for sustainability.

Specifically, any revision to current forest management practices should show:

1. The anticipated changes in **world** climate and atmospheric composition likely to occur with the removal of various areas of forest.
2. A biological explanation of how much time is needed for a forest to regenerate itself to a **full-growth** condition on a **sustainable** basis given the variable of the removal of a large quantity of the biomass from its surface.
3. A full explanation of how the harvesting of timber will be accomplished to **minimize impacts on animal populations** in the area harvested; and concurrent with this explanation, what measures are scheduled to **enhance animal living conditions** in other areas not harvested.

The true costs—both economic and life-affective—have been given little attention in any forest management plan undertaken to date. This is the time and opportunity to look at matters with a wider view. Without a more globally oriented outlook, the WOPR is simply an elaboration of the Oregon and California Lands Act, a document mired in seventy year old thinking.

Cordially,


Karl R. Rasmussen

Cc: Senator Ron Wyden, Senator Gordon Smith, Representative Greg Walden, Oregon State Governor Ted Kulongoski, Senator Alan Bates, Representative Peter Buckley, President George W. Bush