

Bureau of Land Management
Western Oregon Plan Revisions Office
333 SW 1st Avenue
Portland, OR 97208

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January 3, 2008

Dear BLM,

I am writing to express my serious concern about the BLM's focus on Alternative 2 of the Western Oregon Plan Revision (WOPR). Alternative 2 dismantles critical protections for endangered species and habitat, including rolling back the current minimal levels of protection for riparian areas. This regressive shift in policy would inevitably reduce air and water quality and quality of life for those of us who live in the communities adjacent to these BLM lands.

It is incomprehensible that the BLM is considering rolling back these protections at a time in history when governments throughout the world are beginning to recognize the serious and growing impacts of global warming and the crucial role of forests, especially old growth forests, as significant carbon sinks which help reduce the impact of green house gasses. In addition, transitioning low elevation old growth forests to tree plantations ensures higher risk of wildfire and a need for continuous management to prevent those wildfires.

The OHV proposal outlined in Alternative 2 is of particular concern to me as a resident of Selma Oregon. The prospect of identifying thousands of acres of BLM lands as designated OHV emphasis areas is appalling. The Illinois Valley is home to a growing number of retirees, who move here for the scenery and the peace and quiet. The prospect that the BLM would be making lands adjacent to private properties appealing to off road vehicle enthusiasts from all over the west coast is mind boggling to those of us who live here. The inability to keep off road vehicles out of private properties adjacent to BLM lands, the noise, garbage, damage in general and specifically to riparian areas, and the inevitable loss in property values present grave concerns, none of which are addressed in Alternative 2.

Finally, the touted economic impact is a non-factor. The cost of wear and tear on public roads, the hidden costs of building miles of new logging roads, the cost of potential tourist and non-motorized wilderness recreation are not factored into the public costs of timber sales at a time when there is a timber glut and prices are lowest in years. In addition, the timber sales are most surely NOT going to generate any sustainable local jobs while the Illinois Valley becomes a third world country type exporter of raw materials.

Please protect our remaining old growth forests and focus forest management on BLM lands that have already been logged and require thinning and restoration. Alternative 2 is lose-lose for the residents of the Illinois Valley. I strongly support Alternative 1 (no change). Protect our forest habitats, our property values, our residences from wildfire, and our opportunity to develop sustainable economic alternatives to regressive cut and run timber sales, including tourism and recreation.

Sincerely,



Marcy Sowa
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CC: Oregon Congressional Delegation

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