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January 7, 2008

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

Dear BLM,

I urge you to support the No Action Alternative.

~~I'm uncomfortable telling professional foresters how to do their job and this letter does not claim to do that.~~ However, it does support a "constraint" for the profession. All professions have to operate within certain constraints. For example, when I was a teacher, one constraint was "you shall not use physical punishment." Some teachers felt that giving a kid a quick swat on the backside would be preferable to finding other ways to deal with destructive behavior, yet most teachers could see that physical punishment, even if it seemed to work in the short term, could have long term consequences, and that one teacher's swat on the butt could be another's license for sadism. Given this constraint I was still able to do a professional job even though this previously commonplace way of managing student behavior was now off limits. I believe I was able to do a better job.

It's in this spirit that I see the public wanting the constraint of ensuring old growth clearcutting is "off limits" applied to the profession of forestry. Given this constraint it is still possible to do an excellent job of managing our forests. Just as, during my career, I met folks who lamented the passing of corporal discipline, there are folks who don't see old growth stands as the unique resource they are. And, perhaps in your agency if you are being pushed to "increase the cut" it is tempting to look at old growth as a lot of board feet in a small space. Folks are entitled to their opinion. However polls show that the majority of the public support leaving the old growth ecosystems intact and this letter urges you to have the courage to take the long term, and broadest scientific, view.

In addition, just as the fishing industry now sees the need for marine sanctuaries, such as the one President Bush just created near Hawaii, because of how much they increase the health of the surrounding ocean, sooner or later the timber industry will understand we need land sanctuaries for the same reasons. The various old growths are the obvious choice for sanctuaries. The MOST diversity in

the least amount of square footage. The only justifiable economic use of old growth for the long term public good is to leave them as sanctuaries, just as we are doing in the ocean. We still do not fully understand the complicated web of soil, plant, microorganisms, and insect relationships, so we must keep these living laboratories available for future generations.

Previous douglas fir plantations that are now being managed for late succession forest reserves are a great idea but they are not the same as existing old growth areas. I repeat, they are not the same as existing old growth areas. I've read so many scientific arguments for preserving the remaining old growth but I have firsthand knowledge of old growth importance in my own watershed, the Siuslaw. Recent fish surveys have revealed that when conditions are tough, low water for example, 90% of the salmon population hang out in just one area--the area with the most old growth (small though it is.) This finding was a surprise for the fish biologist involved. Who knows what else there is still to find out?

Polls show that the majority of the public support leaving the old growth ecosystems intact. Yes, we trust you to do your job but you must fulfill your important responsibility within this constraint.

I'm in my 60th decade and I truly find it unbelievable that this letter is necessary. Please, please, please, thin the many tree plantations and keep the old growth ecosystems intact.

Sincerely,



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CC:

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