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Western Oregon Plan Revisions
P.O. Box 2965
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To Whom It May Concern:

I want to comment on the WOPR (aside from the really bad name....). I feel pretty inadequate to do so. It is complicated and dense and technical and it sounds so benign. More than benign—it sounds so positive and helpful, especially to local governments in rural areas. It is tempting to say go for it, do your best, give us the money!

But I think that would be wrong. I do a lot of volunteer work with Oregon's Watershed Enhancement Board projects, monitoring our local watershed. I feel a strong commitment to protect landscapes—the large regions of coastal ecosystem that provide habitat for salmonids and the other incredibly complex interrelationships of life forms that depend upon that habitat. The increased harvest that would result from the WOPR cannot avoid doing harm to that ecosystem web.

We humans want all the benefits of social goods—libraries, good schools, beautiful places to live—and we don't want to pay the price. Or at least some don't. Their selfishness makes the amount of money which would be generated by the WOPR very appealing. I am appalled at how this BLM plan plays to that selfish mindset.

What needs to be done is to revise these old laws that were written for a different time, a time when there were more salmon and fewer people, when the impacts weren't felt and were largely not even noticed by people who lived in larger population centers far from the forests that were being cut. The technology was different and what we knew—the science—was different. What we need is the power and pressure to change these rules and end this destructive role which was set up for the BLM, find different ways to fund local governments and provide for the needs of populations (also changing dramatically) of people who live in so-called rural areas.

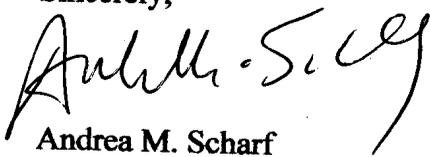
But this isn't going to happen, is it? Instead there will be lawsuits to stop the WOPR from going into effect and we will continue down the same foolish path we have been on, a path that was interrupted by the Northwest Forest Plan which negotiated

interests in a pretty fair way. I can't imagine how cutting old growth forests will help anyone but the big timber companies and their investors. When the current administration is finally turned out of office, perhaps some more intelligent approach can be initiated. Until then, I can only hope that the BLM adopts the plan that will preserve the most old-growth and cause the least impact on ecosystems, and that you move very very slowly so that there is a chance that legal ways will be found to stop this misguided effort.

You have done a great job in informing people, I have to say that—although I'm not sure in the end that it makes much difference. The law is bad, the mission of the BLM is misdirected, and until this country makes some serious changes in policy, what people like me think won't count for much.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrea M. Scharf". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Andrea M. Scharf