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86070 Cougar Lane
Eugene, Oregon 97402
January 9, 2008

U.S. Bureau of Land Management
Western Oregon Plan Revision
P.O.B. 2965
Portland, Oregon 97208

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Dear Sirs:

Last week I learned that the Bureau of Land Management has been using new science to revise the maps of Timber Management Areas and Late Successional Management Areas that are/were part of Alternative 2 of the W.O.P.R. I realize that the maps I saw are still being worked on, but these maps are dramatically different from the maps released with the EIS in August 2007, at least in the southwestern quarter of the Eugene District near Veneta/Crow/Lorane, where I live. Although the public comment period hasn't ended yet, we all seem to have been commenting on something that is quite different from the direction in which the W.O.P.R. is now heading.

I don't see how the comment process that ends January 11 can be valid, when so many people have commented on an EIS and maps that are already in the process of being substantially changed by the BLM. Residents, farmers, and vineyard keepers in the area where I live would have been much more alarmed and much more active in the comment process if we had realized that the timber management area (as it appears in last week's maps) begins just across Territorial Road (a road that is near where most of us live.) In the Alternative 2 map we were given with the EIS, there were eight to twelve miles of BLM Late Successional Management Areas between Territorial Road and the first TMAs. Now there is nothing. In addition, sections on the far (west) side of the Alternative 2 TMAs have also been changed from LSMAs to TMAs. Only a few local residents even know any of this is happening, and the comment deadline is only two days away.

With the new maps, the loss for the people who live and farm in Lorane, Crow, and Veneta will be incalculable. Please note that the problems outlined below are problems just for our local area. In this letter, I will not attempt to address all the other problems with Alternative 2 that have been described in my own earlier letter and many other people's letters.

Veneta/Crow/Lorane problems from the new mapping include:

- 1) Wildlife losses: Wildlife such as elk and birds that have habitat both near our homes and in nearby older forests will disappear as they lose the forests. They will also be hurt by herbicide use in the forests.
- 2) Herbicide use: If BLM goes back to using herbicides, as the agency has proposed in Alternative 2, the herbicides will blow toward us with the wind from the west, doubling or more the amount that now comes toward us from the private lands of the O & C checkerboard. Health of humans and of wild and domestic animals will be hurt. Farms and vineyards will risk losing organic status. Herbicides will be absorbed in our groundwater. Streams flowing east, toward us, will contain more herbicides. Herbicides in Wolf Creek, for example, will harm salmon populations and hurt award-winning recovery efforts and dramatic fish population recovery in the Siuslaw.
- 3) Climate: Effects of clearcutting approximately 80 additional square miles to the west of our homes need to be studied. Results may include stronger winter winds with greater storm damage, and drier conditions. Intermittent smoke from slash fires will exacerbate lung illnesses.
- 4) Recreation losses: We residents will lose places near our homes where we love to walk and be alone with nature. Hunters and fishermen will lose forests and clear streams. BLM will no longer share older forests with the community of people who live in and near them, but will remove these forests far away from us, where they are hard to get to and cannot be part of our lives without the expenditure of a lot of gasoline (= carbon emissions) and time. The recreation impact will be heavy on residents of not only Crow, Veneta, and Lorane, but also Eugene.
- 5) Education losses: Educators using the older forests of nearby Coast Range to help students learn about ecosystems will not be able to do this.
- 6) Home losses: People living near BLM clearcuts (for example, people along Wolf Creek Road) will lose monetary value on their homes, but much more importantly, they will become spiritually sickened by living amid devastation and physically sickened by living next to slash fires and herbicides.

I urge B.L.M. to reconsider the new plans that have been made since Alternative 2 was released (along with reconsidering Alternative 2 itself.) These new plans are apparently being made with owl science in mind, and I don't have enough scientific background to know what they mean to the spotted owl. But I do know that the new plans will do serious harm to the environment and people of the Veneta/Crow/Lorane area.

Sincerely yours,

Kate Rogers Gessert

Kate Rogers Gessert

*Hard copy of
e-mail letter
sent to
orwopr@or.blm.gov
January 9, 2008*