

January 8, 2008

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Dear Mr. Reuwsaat,



I am taking the time to write to you out of grave concern for my home, my retirement as well as for our state. I realize my letter is long but please take the time to let me share two concerns of mine that are currently being considered within our state. Briefly, I retired almost ten years ago to a beautiful home on 5 gorgeous acres in Selma, Oregon. Many wondered why I choose Selma of all places. I can only say if you saw my home and property on Deer Creek itself, you would, without question, understand. Sadly, I write you today because my home and property are about to become a nightmare that many of us have already experienced and there looms on the horizon the possibility of things getting much worse.

I am simply going to state for you what I know and how I feel about it.

First issue is the BLM's proposed Western Oregon Plan Revisions. I find it hard to fathom in today's world, with access to so much knowledge, that we actually still think clear-cutting is a solution to anything. Cheapest way to log, yes, but certainly not the healthiest for anyone or anything left in it's path of destruction. How can we not have realized that maintaining a "sustainable forest" is the only way to keep us in jobs and help our economy? That means we must log sustainably. It has been proven that sustainable logging is not only healthy for a forest, but is beneficial towards fire protection as well as the huge value of being able to log forever. If and only if, we log sustainably. How can we not have learned that clear-cutting is rape and destruction of a forest and ecosystem that will never heal nor provide long term anything, let alone jobs. The evidence is in our forests themselves. Just look at the all the clear-cutting and tell me what it accomplished that was positive to our future? How about looking at the "re-planted" forests, the few that actually are re-planted, and tell me how they compare to a healthy diverse ecosystem?

I also cannot fathom those who claim this proposal will help make us fire safe. I lived through the Biscuit fire first hand and KNOW the falsehood to that statement. Again the evidence is in and the forests bear witness. Old growth may burn but seldom if ever does it die. It comes back. Clear-cuts don't. Truth is that old growth is not only a vital part of a healthy forest, but a healthy factor in fire prevention. Anyone who has logged property can witness what happens to remaining trees when their "shelter" is removed. They dry up, die or get diseased when not protected. What are we thinking? Removing any of the remaining old growth cannot possibly be justified. The science is in. Yet it appears only to those who choose to see it. Reminds me of global warming. For years big business and government that would have had to make changes, said it was a hoax. It was just not true they said and people

anyone that we should have listened then because the cost and time and effort it exceeds what it would have been 10 years ago and we don't even know if we can fix the damage that's continued in those 10 years. Having to now face an environment of obvious global warming, how can we possibly not see the correlation between deforestation and the planet warming up? It has been happening all over the planet and the fact that we have already removed 75 % of our old growth, should be cause for concern, grave concern. We cannot replace old growth, not for generations, upon generations to come. When it's gone, it's gone. For us to even consider another "quick fix" for profit and once again not factor in the long-term consequences is beyond my scope of comprehension and is core to this letter. Old growth is a must in a healthy forest. I live in a clear-cut city. It's not only ugly and pathetic to look at all year but now the creeks and rivers are full of mud and slug from the hills/mountains that lay barren when it rains. (I wonder how the salmon like it?) This then, of course, is causing the hills/mountains to recede, as another consequence of clear-cutting. The mud and slug is washing into our water supply. Which brings up the question, what about our water supply? Without the trees, especially old growth, to capture water, what is expected for the coming year's water supply? Another fact is the direct connection between a healthy forest and a healthy water supply and who is held responsible if one is destroyed thereby destroying the other. The BLM? I think not. I venture to say that this too has not been factored into any long-term possible consequence of the actions being proposed. If one does not live in the area's being damage or destroyed there seems to be no need to worry. Well I am worried. I am beyond worry for I am terrified that my dream is being destroyed and I don't even have a say in the matter. The very fact they, the BLM, is systematically taking away my rights to even voice an opinion, let alone an objection, should be a red flag to someone, anyone, who is seeing what has been transpiring the last few years.

Secondly I would like to give voice to my absolute disbelief in the BLM's proposal for Off Road Vehicles (OHV). Right from the start I am urging you NOT to let this happen. I will share from first hand experience that the nightmare on this subject has already begun. They (off road vehicles) are prevalent throughout the year in Deer Creek, which is at the back of my property. The only time of year they do not run rampant is during the winter when Deer Creek becomes a river. Is it possible the correlation between all the logging that's been taking place in the Valley and the creeks drying up is being ignored? When in years past these creeks were full all year? Just a passing thought. I have called and complained about the damage being done to the creek and the noise to any and all agencies I can think of and always hit the wall of "nothing can be done". It is disheartening to witness the creek being destroyed and ravaged by folks who don't live here nor care what havoc they leave behind and there is no one to turn to or anyone who seems to care. The noise they make going back and forth through the creek is not something I should

have to listen to from the comfort of my home or property. Beyond the horrendous noise they make is the damage they leave behind. I have watched as they go back and forth, back and forth, destroying the creek bed in their wake. Then let us not overlook their dropping of trash along the way and yes in the creek. I wish I could properly express my frustration at watching these careless people destroy a creek that should not have such activities taking place within it or near it aside from how disruptive it is to my personal experience. I never factored this into my dream retirement nor thought things could take such a turn. I used to enjoy a pair of eagles who liked to feed in the water holes as the creek's waters receded. Not anymore.

Now add what happens to the surrounding forest with these destructive vehicles and one has to ask "why on earth are we letting this happen?" What are we doing and why? Are there not enough places for folks to make noise and destroy things without letting them come into residential areas, do their damage and then go home without so much as an after thought or care in the world?

This proposal must be stopped in its tracks, pun intended, for the OHV situation is ALREADY out of control. That's what is so hard to deal with. The probability is obvious that it will get worse, much worse.

I urge you to envision, this were your backyard, so that you might get a sense of losing everything you worked for and planned for in your retirement. What if your place of beauty and tranquility was being disrupted and destroyed? Please do not let this happen. It is wrong, and as a taxpaying citizen of Oregon I am urging you to protect my rights to privacy, peace and quiet, the beauty that abounds here, as well as protecting the creek and surrounding area from the damage these off road vehicles do each year. If no one can stop it now what on earth happens later? Per the sheriff "there is no law against what they are doing". Isn't that Perfect!

I have not even mentioned the displaced wildlife due to both of these concerns. That would be a letter unto itself.

Please know I am not someone who has nothing better to do with her time than complain. I simply am an Oregonian who is expressing my deep concern for decisions being considered that are irreversible and destructive beyond scope. I am a wife, woman, grandmother, sister, daughter, neighbor, friend, shop owner, taxpayer, citizen who lives in a beautiful valley and wants to be able to continue to love and enjoy it's splendor throughout my retirement without being fearful over the long term consequences of these very serious proposals that effect our state and it's future.