

RECEIVED
JAN 11 2008

2581

January 9, 2008
Edward W. Shepard, State Director
United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management Western Oregon Plan Revisions
P.O. Box 2965
Portland, OR 97208

Dear Mr. Shepard:

We are writing to strongly oppose the BLM's Western Oregon Plan Revision (WOPR) Preferred Alternative. We support the No Action Alternative and urge the BLM to reconsider their preference.

We are particularly concerned about the threat to water and fish resources posed by the WOPR Preferred Alternative. As you know, the Environmental Protection Agency was highly critical of the preferred alternative when it wrote to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and we join in the EPA's concern about the harm to rivers, streams and fish from increased logging.

We want to remind you that there were scientific peer reviews that strongly criticize the WOPR plan for its potential harm to endangered species and water quality. We find the BLM analysis too politically motivated and urge that the analyses of impacts be reviewed by a reputable independent scientific organization.

We are also deeply concerned, in a future in which global warming threatens water quantity and quality, about the damaging effects from increased logging of old growth forests, one of the best sources and conservers of cold, pure water for its slow and gradual release into our streams and rivers. We are amazed that there is no recognition in the WOPR models of global warming, and no plans to address its looming problems, as they relate to forests and waters.

Ninety per cent of the old growth forests that covered western Oregon two centuries ago have been cut down. Most of the ten per cent that remains was set aside for permanent protection by the Northwest Forest Plan in 1994. Now, the Bureau of Land Management seeks to log much of this last bit of old growth. The WOPR preferred alternative would circumvent the Northwest Forest Plan by allowing massive logging of old growth and mature forests on Oregon BLM lands, permitting a 700 per cent increase in logging Oregon's last BLM old growth forests. That is unacceptable.

Once old growth forests are gone, they are gone, in effect, forever. The ecological conditions of an old growth forest take up to a thousand years to develop, and the disappearance of old growth will promote increases in noxious weeds and invasive species which old growth resists, but which move in after a clear-cut. Such invasions threaten native fish and wildlife.

The BLM and federal agencies should be actively engaged in thinning overstocked second and third growth public timberlands if they care about sustainable jobs. Such thinning and better management on these previously logged lands could provide an estimated two billion board feet of marketable timber.

Old growth forests are key to clean, clear rivers, streams, and lakes. Old growth is a permanent benefit to the region's people and plants and animals including endangered salmon and other species.

We strongly urge the No Action Alternative, and the rejection of the BLM's Preferred Alternative.

Sincerely,



Candice Guth and David Pogel
1816 SE 34th Ave.
Portland, Oregon 97214

CC: Senator Ron Wyden, Senator Gordon Smith, Representative Blumenauer, Governor Kulongoski