

Enclosure: Comments on the BLM's Timber Management Plan.
Comments by the Sierra Club.

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Ancient Forests on the Chopping Block

Make Your Voice Heard - Comments Due November 9

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The Bush administration has announced shocking new plans to significantly increase logging on 2.6 million acres of public land in western Oregon by clearcutting ancient forests and reducing protections for salmon-bearing creeks and streams. Rising out of a settlement between the timber industry and the Bush administration, the Bureau of Land Management's "Western Oregon Plan Revision" is the gravest threat to Oregon's ancient forests in years. Announced in mid-August, the draft Western Oregon Plan Revision (WOPR) will mean the loss of ancient forests from the northern Willamette Valley to southern Oregon's Siskiyou Mountains.

According to the Oregonian, the BLM's draft plan would boost logging of trees 200 years and older sevenfold over the next decade. This would be an unprecedented and unsustainable increase in logging Oregon's last ancient forests and, by the BLM's own admission, will open up currently protected streamside forests and ancient forest reserves to clearcutting.

Ancient forest logging is already a serious problem on BLM lands in Oregon, but the WOPR would drastically increase this cutting and cause lasting harm to public lands:

- The BLM's "preferred alternative" would more than double the area of ancient forests clearcut on BLM lands.
- The proposal would eliminate Northwest Forest Plan's protections for ancient forests its strategy for protection of rivers, streams and clean water.
- Timber production would be put above all other uses of the forest, including protection of watersheds and stream flows, fishing and recreation opportunities, and associated economic activity.
- Fire risk and severity would be increased as the BLM converts healthy ancient forests into dense, flammable tree plantations full of logging slash.
- The BLM ignores the impacts on global warming from increased clearcutting and roadbuilding in native forests (a major source of carbon release) as well as the carbon sequestration value of currently standing old forests.
- Over 1,000 miles of new logging roads and 140,000 acres of clearcuts would occur in the first decade alone!

- 2000 square miles of forests would be put in "timber management areas," where clearcutting is emphasized.



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