

Protecting Public Forestlands



Forest Voice

1993
Volume 6
Number 2

A Publication of the Native Forest Council

Will the Forest Summit...

rettet den Wald
sauvez la forêt
salvate il bosco
salvai il god
save our woods



Also in this issue:

- *Report from the Summit*
- *Arson in the National Forests*
- *The NFC Testifies Before Congress*
- *The North American Free Trade Agreement*

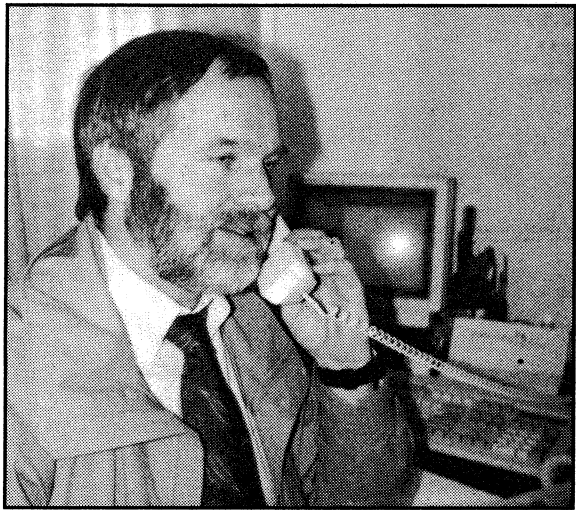
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From the Executive Director



Timothy Hermach

Summit Time

In February of this year the World Resources Institute published a draft study on the forest crisis, *Breaking the Deadlock: Obstacles to Forest Policy Reform*. In their Conclusions and Recommendations section, WRI made this observation: "It becomes increasingly difficult to say what are practical suggestions, when one's research tends to show that **what is politically feasible is usually too minor to make any difference, while changes significant enough to be worthwhile are often unthinkable in practical political terms.**"

The future of America's forests will depend, in great part, on whether the Clinton Administration can recant that bleak analysis and produce the politically unthinkable. But, so far, presidential actions have lagged behind executive rhetoric. During the presidential campaign, candidate Clinton promised to curtail public-lands abuse by eliminating below-cost timber sales and charging higher fees for grazing and mineral extraction. But just two days before the forest summit, the President was visited by a big dose of political reality courtesy of a western delegation of Democratic Senators. It can be surmised that they threatened to withhold support for Clinton's economic package as long as it raised abuser-fees for their friends, the already-wealthy beneficiaries of public-land exploitation. Clinton blinked. The provisions

were removed from his economic legislation, and welfare logging, welfare ranching, and welfare mining are alive and well on public lands. The pre-summit message was unmistakable: Below the layers of summit-euphoria, where the mold of political reality grows, the forces of extraction were still firmly in control.

We were all summit-hopeful; a hope born of opportunity. Yet hope makes a good breakfast but a poor supper, says the bromide. For the forests, the summit was supper time, and a decade of gnawing on hope told us our portion would likely be small, and it wouldn't taste good. With representatives who preach the virtues of free enterprise on the one hand, and are quick to protect subsidies on the other, environmentalists are very likely to get a few "significant tracts" of ancient-forest preserves in the Pacific Northwest, while industry gets access to everything else in 156 national forests. As Alexander Cockburn writing in *The Nation* put it, "license to rape and pillage all the way from the Cascades to the Atlantic."

Still, we are not ungrateful. The President's attention in this matter is unprecedented. Not since Theodore Roosevelt walked the Yosemite valley with John Muir has an administration taken so personal an interest in preserving America's wilderness heritage. But as the forest issue bounces back to Congress, will intent continue to be subverted by the financial might of the Japanese and the timber industry's lobby?

We live in a time of declining civic virtue. Many in Congress have become what **Mother Jones** harshly describes as "ruttish whores to big money." Citing just one example, the insurance industry "slid over \$21.5 million under Congress' door since 1985." Similarly, the timber industry, and the mega-powerful Japanese lobby, beneficiaries of log-export policies, are sliding their share of cash to congressional supporters, insisting on court-proof access to troubled public lands and an unfettered flow of American resources to Japan. As we look beyond the summit to a congressional resolution, two concerns predominate. First, industry is demanding "sufficiency"

which, as Cockburn describes, is a legal term "embodying the corporate ravager's eternal dream of being immune to court challenge." Sufficiency would provide the timber industry with a guaranteed level of public timber exempt from court injunctions, environmental laws, and judicial review. If Congress grants the demand, the playing field--which has never been level--becomes unplayable.

Unrelated to the summit, but perhaps more serious, are the provisions of NAFTA - the North American Free Trade Agreement. (see: *The Hidden Cost of Free Trade*) The agreement in its present form--a legacy of the Bush Administration--has the potential to invalidate environmental laws, health and safety regulations, and import/export restrictions. Under the guise of free trade, big business is lobbying to get virtually unlimited access to the hemisphere's resources, unencumbered by local, state, or government regulations, or the democratic expression of public will. Former Indiana Congressman Jim Jontz is heading an effort to reform this ill-advised agreement. If the effort fails, gains made at the forest summit may shortly be invalidated.

This edition of the *Forest Voice* will trace the forest issue from problem definition, to pre-summit concerns, to the summit itself; with post-summit analysis, an enlightening look at NAFTA, and the role of arson in the national forests. Although the NFC was not invited to directly participate in the summit, we did receive press credentials to cover the event and distributed over 400 press kits to regional and national media. Additionally, we provided information to the White House summit team and organized a coalition of over 50 grassroots organizations who spoke with a single voice to summit officials. We ran commercial television ads the day of the summit, and I personally testified before the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee on the Forest Service budget. The NFC has also been requested to provide the White House with a post-summit analysis. Our thanks for the continuing support of our members who have made our participation in these crucial events possible.

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National Forests, National Disasters



Olympic National Forest, WA

photo by Tryg-Sky/LightHawk

by
**Victor
Rozek**

William Dietrich, in his superbly researched book *The Final Forest* recounts an ironically telling event. Shortly after the catastrophic eruption of Mount St. Helens, a concerned President Jimmy Carter flew across southwest Washington to view the devastation. Skimming over the crests of barren, lifeless hills, the president expressed his horror at the extent of the destruction. State officials awkwardly explained that they had not yet reached the site of the volcanic eruption. What Carter was viewing was human-caused. The president was seeing the results of clearcut logging.

Like most Americans, Carter had been spared the sight of the blight infecting our national forests. Many people still believe that national forests, like national parks, are protected from logging by law. They are not. They are, however, typically remote and inaccessible which has facilitated their demise. Whole mountain ranges can be stripped in isolation, free from public scrutiny, exempt from public concern.

Clearcutting is the practice of cutting, then burning every living thing in 40 to 80 acre increments. Scorched-earth forestry. Decades of it have brought this once dominant forest ecosystem to near-total ruin. Ninety-five percent of the original forests that once carpeted the entire eastern half of the nation, much of the Pacific Northwest and portions of California, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado, are gone. What remains is primarily in the Northwest, much of it badly fragmented, stressed by years of overcutting, victimized by outdated management practices that subordinate all other forest values to commodity timber production.

The problems are well documented: loss of biological diver-

sity; destruction of wildlife habitat and fisheries; increased flooding; soil erosion; reductions in clean water and fresh air; carbon release which speeds global warming; spreading desertification; and destruction of public property.

But perhaps equally galling to the average taxpayer is the staggering economic inefficiency of the Soviet-style management practices of the U.S. Forest Service, the agency charged with the care of

***Bad economics and
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have converged on
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our national forests. Over the last decade, the Forest Service has lost more than \$5.6 billion of taxpayer money on timber sales.

By selling below-cost timber, the federal government unfairly competes with the private sector and encourages the continued liquidation of national forests. These lands contain most of the remaining relatively-intact forest ecosystems. Moreover, flooding the market with cheap subsidized federal timber, depresses overall timber prices and the value of private timber lands. Private holdings comprise 72 percent of all timber-producing lands in the U.S. and are much better suited for intensive forestry. But private woodlot owners simply can not compete with the government which provides thousands of miles of free logging roads and other services at taxpayer expense.

Additionally, Forest Service accounting practices fail to calculate the cost of environmental damage and simply pass it on to the public and future generations. Under the current system we lose

habitat, money, and resource. Bad economics and bad ecology have converged on our national forests.

For about a century, concerned citizens have battled the Forest Service, the timber industry and its captive politicians to save the last of our ancient forests. But the long search for middle ground has effectively yielded nothing. Congress continues to dance around the issue, the forests continue to fall. Only court injunctions, issued as a result of the Forest Service's disdain for existing environmental laws, have measurably slowed the process.

But increasingly, activists are becoming suspicious and disenchanted with the crisis/compromise model of environmental problem resolution. With only five percent left, can we afford to cut the baby in half again? Besides, legislation has proven unreliable because of the government's unwillingness to abide by its own laws. While there is no shortage of environmental legislation that mandates sound resource management, in practice its intent is lost in a torrent of vague regulations, negotiated exemptions, discretionary compliance, and arbitrary enforcement.

We are liquidating the nation's natural resources at below their replacement cost and benefit value to the public. The money currently spent on logging public lands—wasteful employment that consumes much more than it produces—could be applied toward forest rehabilitation. There are jobs to be had, wages to be earned, and taxes to be paid in rebuilding our forests and restoring them to their natural native condition. There are millions of trees to be planted, tree farms to be thinned for the purpose of restoring a native species mix; thousands of miles of streams to mend, riparian zones to heal, and over 300,000

miles of logging roads to undo. There are more jobs in restoring the forests than in cutting them down.

We certainly don't need federal timber for domestic consumption. Each year we export more unfinished timber than the entire cut from our national forests. In the Northwest, for example, two out of every four trees cut are exported; one as a raw log, the other minimally processed. Such third-world practices—of providing raw materials for the benefit of others—deprive us of higher paying, value-added jobs and encourage the rapacious exploitation of our natural resources.

In a little over a century and a half, (a short time in the life of a forest) we have managed to dispatch all but five percent of our native forests. Clearly, there is nothing sustainable in that. Our national forests were set aside for the public good, to be protected, nurtured,

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again?***

and preserved as a part of our national heritage. The government has not upheld that trust. It is time to stop managing our national forests like a social welfare program. Nor can we afford so-called "compromise" or "balanced" solutions that only guarantee piecemeal destruction. Restoring economic and ecological sanity to our nation's forest policy will require embracing a new paradigm; one that rewards conservation, restoration, and sustainability, not exploitation and waste. It remains to be seen whether the Forest Summit will accomplish that.

Speaking Truth to Power: *The NFC testifies before Congress*

*Statement of Timothy G. Hermach, Executive Director
of the Native Forest Council, before the
House Appropriations Subcommittee*

Washington, D.C.
March 25, 1993

My name is Tim Hermach and I am the Executive Director of the Native Forest Council, a national grassroots organization headquartered in Eugene, Oregon. I am here today to testify on behalf of the over six million people who support our efforts to bring about an end to the logging of the nation's remaining publicly-owned native forests.

All life depends on the existence and health of our planet's air, soil and water, atmosphere and climate. And these life-support systems depend, in part, on the existence of global forests, 60 percent of which are already gone. Half of that loss took place in just the last 50 years.

These NASA satellite photos, published last year in *The New York Times*, of rainforest in Brazil

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forests and undoing the
damage is the issue.***

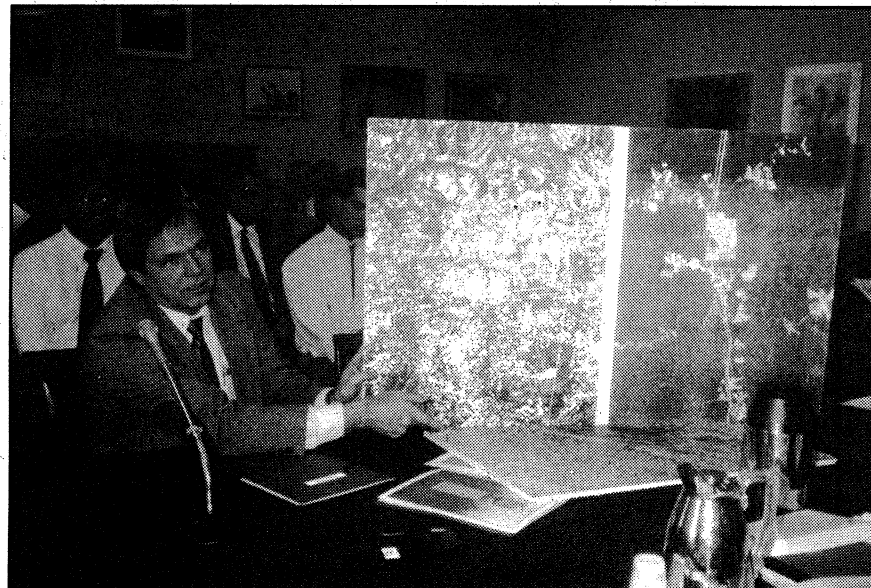
compared with a national forest here at home, serve as but one example of the destruction. They speak for themselves.

Nearly all U.S. conservation organizations, and the heads of many nations are united in asking Brazil to stop logging any more of its rainforest.

But Brazil has logged only 14 percent of the Amazon basin, while the U.S. has logged 95 percent of its nearly one billion acres of native forest, including tens of millions of acres of the most valuable publicly-owned national forests.

How did this happen? The U.S. Forest Service blames Congress saying that it set the targets; but Congress says the Forest Service agreed to meet these targets, and claimed they could do it legally and sustainably.

But today blame is not the issue; determining the true condition of



the nation's forests and undoing the damage is the issue. And that means looking at our budgetary priorities. We suggest putting people back to work making America's forests great again while putting an end to the further loss of public resources.

For the past 50 years federal agencies have failed to acknowledge that they have logged at unsustainable, destructive, and illegal levels; but the federal courts have. Nor have they acknowledged that 500-year-old trees are not renewable. Nor, that ecosystems and fisheries are not renewable. Nor, that they don't really know how to grow a forest, and maybe not even healthy tree farms. Nor, that those federal employees who would tell us the truth about these matters are often too frightened to do so.

Because of the volume of exports, it is clear that there is no log shortage. There never has been. According to the US Department of Commerce, and quarterly reports published by the USDA Pacific Northwest Research Station; for the last ten years we have annually exported nearly ten billion board feet of unfinished raw-material wood products from the Northwest. (That's 45% of the annual cut, both public and private, from six states: Alaska, Washington, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, and California.) This is far more than the total amount of public timber logged in the Northwest (four billion board feet) and is nearly the equivalent of the nation's entire cut from federal lands! Reducing raw-material exports and investing in value-added manufacturing would put people to work and add to our nation's economy.

Today, the Forest Service budget must be made to reflect our support for the nation's private landowners

who grow trees. We should not undermine their efforts through unfair Forest Service competition and below-cost timber sales.

Additionally, preserving our remaining public native forests means that the Forest Service can stop wasting our tax dollars while

***"...changes significant
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practical political terms."***

liquidating billions of dollars worth of public assets. We are depleting our nation's natural resource capital accounts. Losses are estimated to be valued in the range of \$25 billion to \$100 billion dollars a year. Further, the Forest Service does not account for the many ecological costs they create and pass on to the general public such as degraded water quality, lost fisheries, lost recreation, and increased flooding.

Federal government accounting claims that our national forests--the giant trees, the water, the fish and

the wildlife--are worth nothing. Standing forests are not valued. The only value currently acknowledged is commodity timber production. The Forest Service claims that our forests, using their jargon, have a "zero-cost basis" and are a "free good." They sell our trees for much less than their replacement cost while unfairly undercutting the nation's private tree-growers. The money from the sale of public trees does not begin to recover the cost of repairing the damage caused by logging.

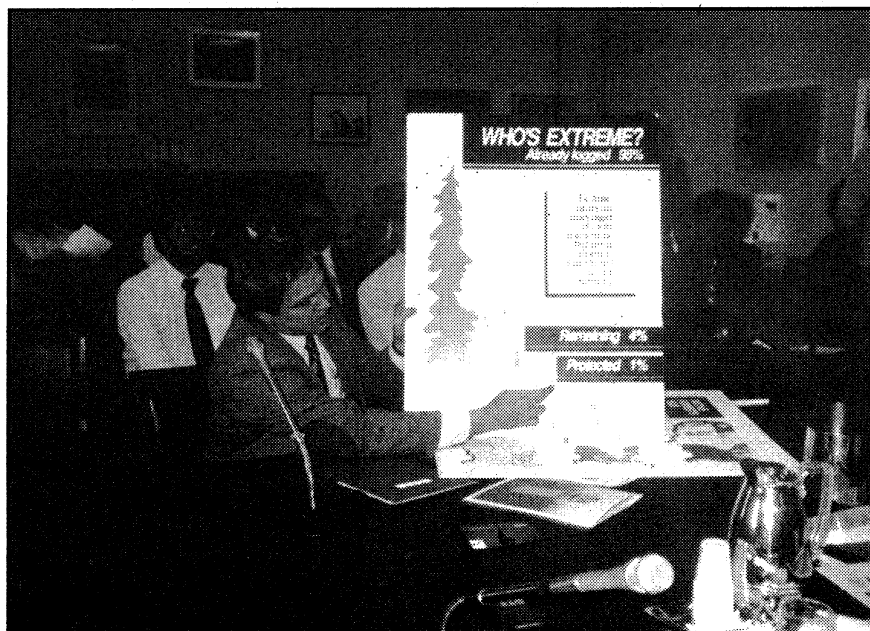
Furthermore, while the Forest Service claims they make money selling the public's trees, analyses performed at the request of Congress show that the Forest Service logging program has lost at least \$5.6 billion over the past decade.

As for solutions, the World Resources Institute observed that: "It becomes increasingly difficult to say what are practical suggestions, when one's research tends to show that what is politically feasible is usually too minor to make any difference, while changes significant enough to be worthwhile are often unthinkable in practical political terms."

But that should not stop us from trying to say and to do that which is plainly right.

It wasn't politically feasible to free slaves, until the people directed it. It wasn't politically feasible to give women the right to vote, until the public required it. It wasn't politically feasible to grant civil rights, until the people demanded them. It will not be politically feasible to save the last of our native forests until the people of this country cry out for it.

Solutions begin with clear goals. Our Zero-Cut-Jobs Solution provides them.



photos by Gwen Marshall

- It protects what's left of our native forests
- It rebuilds forests, watersheds, and fisheries
- It reduces exports and generates revenues by an inverse excise tax on unfinished raw-material wood products
- It makes government agencies and employees obey the law

Nearly a century ago, President Teddy Roosevelt thought he had protected these forests from the seemingly insatiable appetites of the logging industry. But in 1937-

Every line item in the 1994 Forest Service budget, directly or indirectly related to timber production, should be reduced to zero.

-thirty years later--after seeing the results of the logging in the Olympic National Forest, President Franklin D. Roosevelt was so angered by what he saw that he said, "I hope the son-of-a-bitch that logged that is roasting in hell." What do you think these two strong presidents, one a Republican and the other a Democrat, would do or say if they could see the condition of America's national forests today?

We believe that each and every line item in the 1994 US Forest Service budget, directly or indirectly related to timber production, should be reduced to zero. The funds should instead be diverted to ecosystem restoration and the gathering of information vital to making informed management

President Roosevelt was so angered by what he saw that he said: "I hope the son-of-a-bitch that logged that is roasting in hell."

decisions which comply with our nation's laws. Allow us to see how well the Forest Service can repair and restore our children's and grandchildren's damaged forests and watersheds.

No further timber sales of any kind should be allowed or planned until the following questions have been asked and answered to your complete satisfaction.

- 1) What is the condition of our nation's public and private forests, and what would it take to restore their health?
- 2) What are the cumulative environmental effects of past management practices on these lands?

3) Where are the annual aerial photo mosaics with mylar overlays of all of our public forests? These existed as late as 1984 and would permit you and the public to see the accumulative damage to national forestlands.

4) How many of the 360,000 miles of logging roads are contributing to the siltation of our streams and rivers, killing fish runs, and creating problems for downstream water users? What resources will it take to correct these problems?

5) What is the age, size, and condition of all federal lands previously clearcut and converted to tree plantations?

6) What is the age, size, and condition of all federal native forest lands not yet logged and converted to tree farms?

7) How many miles of streams, by each of the four class sizes, have been degraded or destroyed by logging and/or grazing practices?

8) How is it that a federal Forest Service employee who obeys the law can get harassed out of the agency, but those employees clearly breaking the laws get promotions and cash bonuses? How will this be stopped and reversed?

9) To what degree is each agency--by state, forest, and district--in compliance with existing laws? Why is it not 100 percent? When will it be?

10) When will federal agencies have accurate data including; inventories, negative cumulative effects analyses, and up-to-date forest plans which comply with environmental laws? Until that time, why should any further timber sales be allowed?

11) How much public and private timber has been logged, by state, each year for the past fifty years? Of that amount, how much has been exported unfinished?

12) What roles do federal timber and unfinished exports and imports play in the national, state, and local economies?

13) How is Congress going to reassert its authority and control over federal land management agencies?

14) What can be done to assist communities, industries, and workers, who have been impacted by often-illegal federal practices, to transition to long-term, sustainable forms of economic development?

15) How can the federal government make up for lost timber-receipt revenues to counties and schools without further compromising the forests?

Thank you for your attention.

What we're doing:

Recent goings-on at the NFC

The last few months have been busy ones for the Native Forest Council. Below is a summary of our activities:

- **On March 25th Tim Hermach testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on the proposed Forest Service budget. The written portion of his testimony appears on the facing page.**

- **A week before the summit, the NFC organized a coalition of 50 grassroots environmental groups in an effort to draft a single message for President Clinton. The coalition endorsed a resolution requesting an end to logging of native forests on public lands. The resolution was then submitted to the President and his summit staff. Endorsing groups include: LightHawk, Greenpeace USA, The Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen Association, Earth Island Institute, Oregon Natural Resources Council, and the coalition of Save America's Forests.**

- **The NFC participated in the Forest Summit, submitting information to the Administration's summit team; applying for and receiving press credentials to cover the event; and distributing over 400 media packets to local and national media representatives.**

- **The day of the summit we aired a "stop the logging" commercial on the morning shows of ABC, CBS, and NBC. The same spot was also aired on the ABC Evening News and on Sunday Morning with Charles Kuralt.**

- **On April 17, the Coastal Range Association invited Tim Hermach to be the keynote speaker at their Earth Day celebration in the coastal community of Yachats, OR. Over 200 people were in attendance.**

- **We were also invited to address the students at the University of Oregon Law School.**

- **The NFC hosted Ivan Corny, a Czechoslovakian environmentalist who was touring the United States to learn how grassroots groups were organized and what strategies they used to educate the public and influence indifferent government officials.**

Notice to our membership

The Native Forest Council's computers were recently infected with the Michelangelo virus. As a result we lost the data that had been input since our last system backup. Some of you may have sent us address changes or bulk mailing instructions that were subsequently lost. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause our membership and ask that you bring any inaccuracies to our attention.

Salmon



& Forests

by David Clarke Burks

Native forests and wild salmon are partners in Pacific Northwest ecosystems. The link between them is habitat, and it is precisely habitat that is in jeopardy. At one time 16 million salmon—that's more than the entire combined human populations of Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Montana, Oregon and Vermont—thick as carpet fibers, wrestled against the then-mighty Columbia river, returning with genetic fury to the cold, clear shallows of their youth. Returning to complete a cycle measured in years and thousands of miles; to give and give up life. No more.

Endangered Habitats

As President Clinton was told at the Forest Summit: In the last 100 years we have cut down better than 90% of the ancient forests and killed-off 98% of the wild salmon. To date, the American Fisheries Society has listed 106 populations of west coast salmon and steelhead as extinct, and has identified 214 native spawning stocks of anadromous (sea-going) fish as "threatened" in Oregon, Idaho, Washington and northern California. One hundred-seventy-five of these wild fish stocks in the Northwest are at risk from the effects of logging and road building.

The abuses of unbridled logging have cost the Northwest fishing industry an estimated 20,000 jobs. Pat Ford writing in the High Country News observes: "We have pegged our forest future to intensively managed, short-rotation tree farms and our salmon future to fish farms..." People in the Northwest are beginning to realize that neither engineered trees nor engineered fish can produce the genetic capital necessary for long-term survival.

"The Pacific Northwest is simply anywhere a salmon can get to", wrote Timothy Egan in *The Good Rain*. For better than 12,000 years, salmon has defined the culture and spirit of the Northwest. As native forests have served as ensigns of succession, salmon has been the preeminent symbol of renewal.

The topographical distribution of wild salmon and native forests

overlap. As forests were clearcut over the past century, wild salmon spawning streams were degraded. Maps from a hundred years ago, overlaid with transparencies showing current distributions of native forests and surviving salmon stocks, tell a grim story. As vast landscapes were cleared of native forests, salmon habitat was despoiled. Wild salmon are rivets in the species bridge that spans the Northwest. Today the very structure of native ecosystems is at risk.

Forest Ecosystems

The cycle of nutrient exchange between forests and fish is well-known. Forests provide shade cover and down-woody debris that are critical to salmon survival and reproduction. They cycle clean water and soil nutrients into spawning streams, and anadromous fish return nutrients which are taken up by roots. Nature's fish emulsion. The cycle of exchange nourishes life in the forest. Symbiosis is a central constituent in biologically diverse ecosystems.

Forests are sponges that absorb and hold water. Imagine a landscape without large trees, living and dead, looming above an understory of downed logs, shrubs, ferns and mosses. Then imagine a scrubbed plantation with a single tree-species, little or no ground cover,

void of complex structure. When you picture this scene, you will be imagining a landscape without salmon.

The decline of Northwest fisheries is largely due to the destruction of fish habitat as a cumulative result of poor forest practices, over-grazing, diversion of water for irrigation, construction of dams for hydroelectric power, and other impacts attributable to urbanization. Effects from logging and forest road building have been especially damaging when these activities occur on steep slopes.

Successful fish spawning requires certain stream conditions including proper substrates, cool, well-oxygenated, fresh water and food. Current logging and road building practices alter fish habitat by: reducing the amount of downed logs in streams, increasing sedimentation in stream-bed gravel, and increasing stream temperatures. In the last 50 years, according to reports from the Pacific Rivers Council, over 50% of the large pool habitat for anadromous fish in watersheds in the Pacific Northwest has been lost as a function of logging and road building in national forests.

Economic Values

The Northwest has a large stake in protecting salmon runs. Commercial and recreational salmon, steelhead and trout fisheries combine to produce over \$125 billion in personal income per year and support more than 60,000 jobs. Watersheds that provide habitat for salmon are also the source of clean water for hundreds of Northwest communities and thousands of businesses. They also offer recreational opportunities forming the backbone of a multi-billion dollar tourism industry in the region.

The findings of a recent study headed by noted spotted owl biologist Jack Ward Thomas for the U.S. Forest Service and presented to Judge Dwyer (*the federal jurist who issued the*

injunction against future timber sales in the Pacific Northwest pending a spotted owl recovery plan) stated unequivocally, "It is likely that continued reliance on a species-by-species approach to preserve biodiversity will fail." The linkage between native forest ecosystems and indigenous species survival is no longer a matter for speculation. Timber harvesting must be curtailed in native forests. As the Thomas team report noted, "We find, as other resource analysts before us, there is simply 'no free lunch.'"

What Should Be Done To Restore Habitat (The Short List)

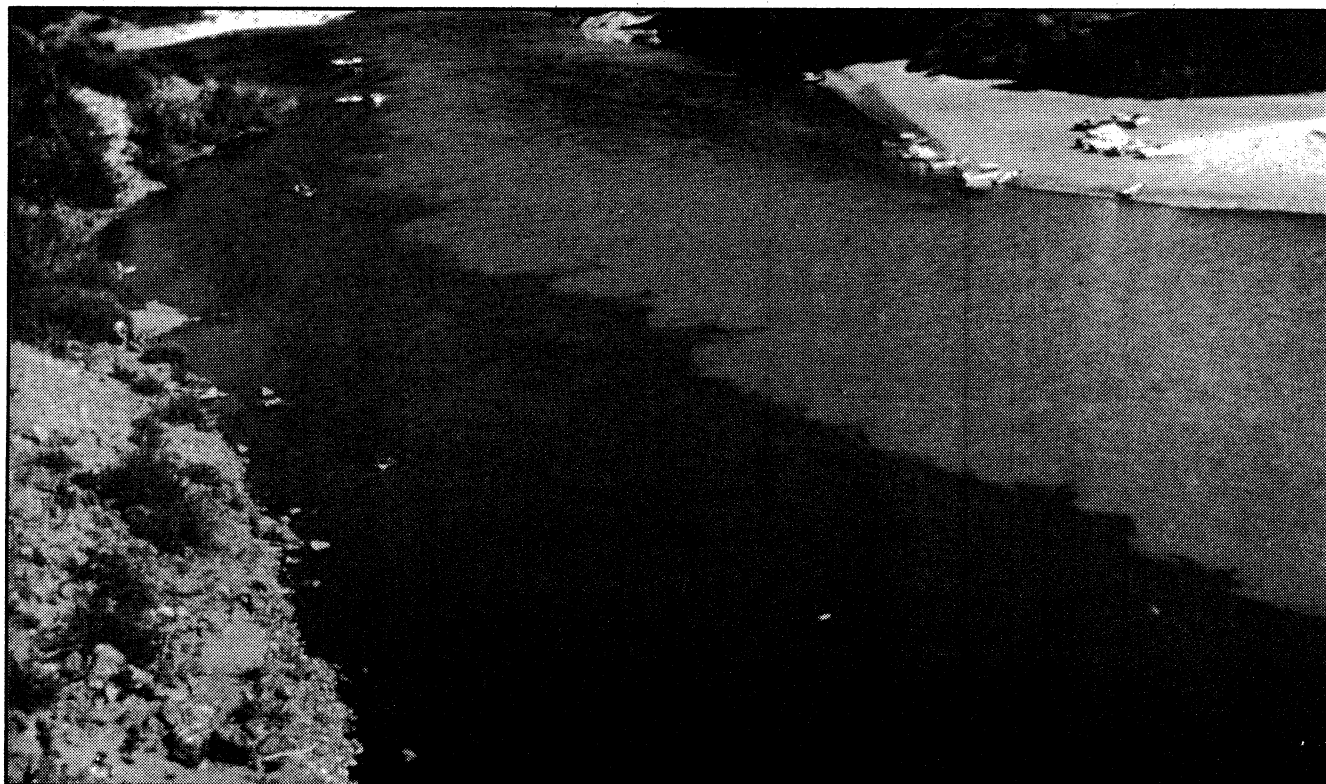
First, leave current roadless areas unroaded and cease harvesting native forests on federal lands.

Permanently protect all watersheds. In areas where logging is permitted, implement longer rotation periods to reduce risk of landslides, soil erosion and sedimentation.

Both short and long-term recovery plans must include ecologically sound restoration programs utilizing riparian silvicultural techniques, erosion abatement, landscape and road restoration, and "stormproofing" of key watersheds.

Our rivers and streams are depopulated and we are deprived of an economical food source—a food source that grows without labor. To remedy that will take decades of work and cost hundreds of millions of dollars, to reacquire something that was once plentiful and free of cost.

The dilemma over ancient forest protection long ago lost its two-dimensional character of "owls vs jobs." What is clearly at stake is the survival of complete ecosystems that embody a multitude of values and benefits that typify the Pacific Northwest's unique quality of life. Permanent protection for forests and salmon is the necessary first step, for present and future generations.



The confluence of two rivers, one clear, the other silted by clearcuts

photo courtesy of Lou Gold

W o l k e o n t h e W i l d S i d e

Sweating Out the Summit

by Howie Wolke

There's consternation in the conservation movement. The results of the "Forced Summit," otherwise known as the forest summit, are a looming potential disaster. The summit is a Clinton campaign promise some hoped he'd forget, and a pro-timber result *appears* likely. Yet some Clinton Administration officials speak of imminent profound change in public land policy.

Which will it be: forced forest disaster, or profound change? To a great extent, that's up to the public lands conservation movement.

Let's view the forest summit in perspective. Roughly 90 percent of the primary native forests in the Pacific Northwest have already been logged to oblivion. U.S. District Judge William Dwyer's injunction protects, for now, most of the remaining spotted owl habitat. What conservationists fear most is that the forest summit will produce a "compromise" that protects some owl habitat while opening some to logging. The timber industry will thus further extend its tentacles into the last 10 percent of the Pacific Northwest's primary forest; so long old growth once again.

Unfortunately, most of the remaining 10 percent is already terribly fragmented. The Cascade, Olympic, Klamath, and Coast Range ecosystems are already severely impaired, though a semi-healthy ecosystem still precariously survives in Washington's North Cascades.

It is important to remember that the northern spotted owl is an indicator species for old growth habitat, but not necessarily for ecosystem health. *Strix occidentalis* may survive under a number of possible scenarios, but without viable populations of large wide-ranging carnivores such as grizzly, gray wolf, and wolverine, the ecosystem remains impoverished. These species are unlikely to survive in highly fragmented landscapes lacking big chunks of unroaded wilderness.

In the Pacific Northwest, with the lone exception of northern California's Salmon-Trinity Alps, only northern Washington has wilderness remaining in half-million acre tracts or larger. Even there, as Mitch Friedman of the Greater Ecosystem Alliance points out, old growth and continuous tracts of forest in general are mostly limited to valley-bottom stringers broken by rocky ridges. Outlying tracts of extensive forest, beyond the peaks, have been shredded. In other words, even the big wilderness of the North Cascades is *Wilderness on the Rocks*.

By contrast, in the Northern Rockies, well over half of the primary native forest remains, fragmented to varying degrees, but in a number of places surviving in big unbroken tracts of million-acre-plus wilderness. If the feared summit scenario occurs, it will set a dangerous precedent for the Northern Rockies, the wildest forest region remaining in the U.S. south of Alaska.

A forest summit "compromise" would also bode ill for the Appalachians. There, less

than 1 percent of the primary forest remains, but extensive--albeit fragmented--tracts of maturing second growth native forest are abundant. This region's generally favorable climate gives us a vivid opportunity to restore functioning wildland ecosystems. Dense vegetation quickly reclaims disturbed sites in the humid East. In the southern Appalachians, where the growing season is quite long, trees grow quickly. Thus, a common bond links the Pacific slope with Turtle Island's oldest mountain chain: abundant moisture and a relatively long growing season create fertile ground for wilderness ecosystem restoration, *in our lifetime*, if we stand strong.

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the forest summit
will produce a 'compromise'...**

Let's bear in mind two more things. First, the last "environmentally friendly" Administration was Jimmy Carter's. In the late '70s when Carter's Undersecretary of Agriculture M. Rupert Cutler announced RARE II, (Roadless Area Review & Evaluation) the conservation movement rolled over in submission like a beaten dog. Led by a small group of Sierra Club and Wilderness Society Washington lobbyists, conservationists proposed less than half of the remaining national forest roadless areas for wilderness designation. They refused to push the peanut people for fear of alienating them. But the timber industry pushed hard, opposing wilderness with vitriolic extremism. Carter's camp withdrew, and RARE II became modern conservation's grandiose defeat. Only 15 of 62 million roadless acres were recommended for wilderness designation. Somebody wiser than I once noted that those who fail to heed the mistakes of the past are doomed to repeat them.

Second, at least some of Clinton's people are overtly pro-conservation. Al Gore knows that there's a crisis, and Bruce Babbitt actually appears to understand biodiversity. There's a window of opportunity here that won't be open for long. The challenge for conservationists is to learn from RARE II and to do it right this time. But without immediate visionary action, the Conservation Movement will indeed blow it again.

By visionary action, I mean this: Conservationists--including the "Gang of Ten" nationals--should immediately develop and unite behind a visionary bio-regional ecosystem protection and restoration plan for the Pacific Northwest. The forest summit is an opportunity to create a visionary precedent that will carry over to other public land forest regions in the U.S. Conservation biologist Dr. Reed Noss has outlined a system for developing such a plan (see "The Wildlands Project" in the special issue of WILD EARTH, box 492, Canton, NY 13617). Here in the Northern Rockies, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act (NREPA) is an example of a proposal that incorporates

many of those principles. (NREPA was introduced in the House of Representatives in 1992, and will likely be reintroduced in 1993.) In a nutshell, Noss and other leading conservation biologists advocate a wildland conservation system of million-acre-plus core reserves, buffer zones, and inter-regional corridors linking the core reserves. The building blocks consist of remaining wilderness and roadless areas, and remaining chunks of old growth. Noss notes that for most regions, extensive wilderness restoration will be essential to heal tattered ecosystems.

Obvious core reserves in the Pacific Northwest are the North Cascades complex, the Olympic Mountains, and the Klamath Mountains complex. Other core reserves will depend primarily upon wildland restoration: roads should be closed and re-vegetated; selective thinning, re-planting, and natural succession can replace tree farms with forests; and natural disturbance regimes, like wildfire and native insect outbreaks, should be restored to the ecosystem. Some dams and other kinds of small developments may also need to be removed. The conservationist proposal for the forest summit should include a stated goal of ultimately protecting the vast majority of public forestlands as core reserves and linkage corridors. Like NREPA, the proposal should include a provision for a new arm of the Forest Service called the Wildland Recovery Corps. The corps would employ thousands, restoring and healing instead of hacking and gouging. There are many decades of work to be done, undoing the damage of many decades.

Should conservationists unite in a visionary wildland strategy, and should they demand that the Clinton people work to enact it, the forest

**The opportunity is now.
Will the conservation movement
learn from its past failures?**

summit would mark a turning point for public forest management in America. The window of opportunity would widen; the parameters of the debate would explode outward; the timber industry would be on the defensive; and the inane verbiage of "spottedowlism" would be eradicated. It's time to speak of ecosystems, not of owls; of landscape processes, not of parcels of old growth. To limit the debate to the fate of owls, loggers, and tracts of old growth is sheer idiocy, and it guarantees further losses. The opportunity is now. Will the conservation movement learn from its past failures? Will conservationists seize the opportunity to forge a new path for public forest protection and restoration in America? Will a concerted visionary strategy at Clinton's forest summit set an example for forest activists around the globe? The twentieth century is almost over, and the choice has never been so clear.

Main Event

The NFC Reports from the Summit

by Victor Rozek



Forest Summit proceedings

photo courtesy of Gary Braasch



Forest Summit proceedings

photo courtesy of Gary Braasch

Portland, OR

Two Days and Counting...

A carefully orchestrated event such as the Forest Summit often discloses more by virtue of what it excludes than by its cautiously managed focus. Cause and effect. You can get a fair notion of what is likely to result from the summit by analyzing a telling pre-summit event and noticing who was not invited.

Two days before the summit, Senator Max Baucus of Montana, the co-author of the infamous Montana Wilderness Act which sought to release four million acres of roadless wilderness to logging

The grassroots, who had done so much to bring this issue to national prominence, were woefully under-represented.

and other extractive industries, triumphantly announced that Bill Clinton had backed down from his declared intent to stop below-cost timber sales, increase grazing fees, and charge royalties for gold, silver and other metals mined from public lands. The timing of the announcement was telling, and a clear message to environmentalists that the forces of extraction were still politically dominant.

Michael Francis, director of the national forest program at The Wilderness Society commented: "I don't think I've ever seen a white flag get put up so fast." His reasoning was; if this was an indication of how valiantly Clinton would struggle on behalf of the

forests when confronted with inevitable opposition from Northwest delegations, we should not expect too much.

From pre-summit White House press releases it was clear that the intent of the organizers was to keep the summit-focus narrow and regional; preferably on the west side of the Cascades. In spite of requests from the summit team for names of potential participants, the grassroots, who had done so much to bring this issue to national prominence, were woefully under-represented.

The Guest List

Fifty people were invited to speak representing such diverse factions as labor, the timber industry, economists, scientists, environmentalists, and fishermen. Several of the invitees, though interesting, were of questionable relevance to the proceedings; a Catholic Archbishop, a historian, and a superintendent of schools.

Of greater concern were those who were omitted from the guest list. Jeff DeBonis of the Association of Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics was not invited so we would not talk about Forest Service practices that smother agency employees who seek to abide by environmental laws. Economist Randall O'Toole of Cascade Holistic Economic Consultants (*seventeen-year veteran of the forest issue*) was not invited, so we would not talk about below-cost timber sales or providing the Forest Service with non-extractive incentives and user fees. Mike Bader of the Alliance for the Wild Rockies was not invited, so we would not talk about the tattered Northern Rockies region. Dave Foreman, Earth First! co-

founder, author and wilderness advocate, was not invited so we would not talk about Big Wilderness proposals with million-acre-plus core reserves, buffer zones,

We are herded through... a gauntlet of local police, Secret Service agents, and metal detectors.

and inter-regional connecting corridors. Tim Hermach of the NFC was not invited, so the problem would not be presented as a national issue; no one would talk about the staggering economic inefficiency of logging public lands, the destruction of public assets, nor would anyone suggest that logging on *all* national forests should be stopped. By and large, people with solutions to offer that challenged the prevailing paradigm--which basically seeks to facilitate a kinder, gentler rape--were largely uninvited and unheard.

The Native Forest Council, like most of its grassroots counterparts, is not invited to sit at the President's table. However, we apply for, and are granted, press credentials. The press is well represented. By some estimates over 1,000 camera-wielding, lap-top-toting fourth-estaters gather in Portland to cover the event.

At the Summit

We are herded through the rain to the back of the immense convention complex and enter through a gauntlet of local police, Secret Service agents, and metal detectors. After our belongings are duly checked, we settle in a cavernous chamber dotted with closed-circuit TV and a garage-sale assortment of electronic broadcasting equipment.

There will be three round-tables testifying before the administration. The first, is composed of people who have been directly affected by the current impasse. The industry strategy is immediately apparent: get as much mileage and melodrama as possible from the phony jobs versus owls issue. Tales of woe and pleas for balance and an end to gridlock. Balance and gridlock are big words here. Not much talk about the decades of imbalance that have brought us to this situation. An industry that comprises less than 4 percent of Oregon's workforce wants guarantees: the same jobs forever, subsidized by tax dollars and public resources.

The environmental side gets off to a rough start. Bill Arthur, the very first environmental speaker, representing possibly the most prestigious and politically powerful environmental organization, the Sierra Club, announced that he was not against exports! He followed that blow by asserting that only one of four logs are exported from

Balance and gridlock are big words here.

the Northwest. The reality--two of four logs are exported, the second one minimally processed--is much different and more indicting of industry practices. Several environmentalists would touch upon the export issue, but no one would correct him.

The second round-table deals with the ecology and economics of the forest issue. Surprisingly, the consensus on all sides is that ecosystem management is desirable. Industry is now clever enough to embrace our lingo, but is still demanding "sufficiency"--a guaranteed timber supply exempt

from legal review. We know from past experience that access, under whatever guise, equates to destruction, eco-babble notwithstanding. Salvage and forest health logging, (industry's current pretext for getting the cut out); natural-stand thinning, new perspectives, new

During this segment the President does something environmentalists have been too timid to do.

forestry: stumps are stumps. During this segment the President does something environmentalists have been too timid to do: he invites comment on the east-side forests.

The last round-table deals with solutions. The most enthusiastic presenter is Gus Kostopulos from WoodNet, an experimental organization launched two years ago. WoodNet is a non-profit network of 300 independent timber products firms. Small firms, predominantly, one to 40 people, producing value-added products like musical instruments, cabinets, wooden door knobs, arts, crafts, and log homes. Members participate in international and domestic trade shows to uncover new markets for their products. They have developed a merchandise catalog, share the cost of advertising, and educate their members about new technologies. Members are encouraged to do more with less; to use scraps. The organization's focus is developing local-based alternatives to traditional lumbering.

The President seemed equally enthusiastic and observed that this type of manufacturing network was

pioneered in Northern Italy centuries ago and persists to this day. It has been so successful, according to the President, that in the 1980s the income of people in Northern Italy was slightly above that of people in Germany. Clinton sees this model as a possible answer for transitioning rural timber communities.

Environmentalists had few solutions to offer beyond employment in restorative forestry. (Which is not insubstantial) There were some bright spots to be sure: the controlled passion of Headwaters' Julie Norman, Andy Kerr, of the Oregon Natural Resources Council, arguing for the primacy of law; the scholarly wisdom of biologist Jack Ward Thomas, the solid economic analysis of Ed Whitelaw; the factual certainty of SCLDF attorney Vic Sher, and the quiet dignity of activist/businesswoman Meca Wawona. John Gordon, Yale University Dean of Forestry, and one of the few regional outsiders, testified in frustration and regret how two-thirds of the ancient forests he had studied in 1984 no longer existed. Gone forever.

Things Unsaid

But there were many things left unsaid which are troubling. No mention of the \$5.6 billion lost in the last decade by the Forest Service on timber sales. Little mention of the economic worth of standing forest. No one assigned a cost or value to the production of air and water, to flood abatement, climate moderation, carbon storage, biodiversity, forest-medicines, recreation, forest-dependant industries; to the ecological damage passed on to the public.

No mention of the unfair government competition with the private sector. No mention of the destruction of public property or the rights of all American citizens to have a voice in the stewardship of their national forests. No mention of the right of wilderness to exist *for its own sake*. In short, the issue was still one of jobs vs owls, albeit squeezed through the cheesecloth of ecosystem management.

Further, no one challenged our wasteful consumption habits or suggested creating markets for recycled wood and paper products. No one suggested that impacted communities could grow alternative fiber sources like kenaf or

John Gordon...testified... how two-thirds of the ancient forests he had studied in 1984 no longer existed.

hemp. Above all, no one adequately challenged the asinine assertion that balance is key to any solution. That opportunity was lost decades ago.

Cutting the Baby

It appears the summit will produce another baby-cutting effort. Recently the administration leaked its draft solution plans. Predictably, they include saving some ancient forest and cutting some more down. Curiously, four weeks after the summit, the Forest Service proposed (*then denied proposing*) a plan to phase out below-cost logging in 62 of 122 national forests by 1998. (Only 17 showed

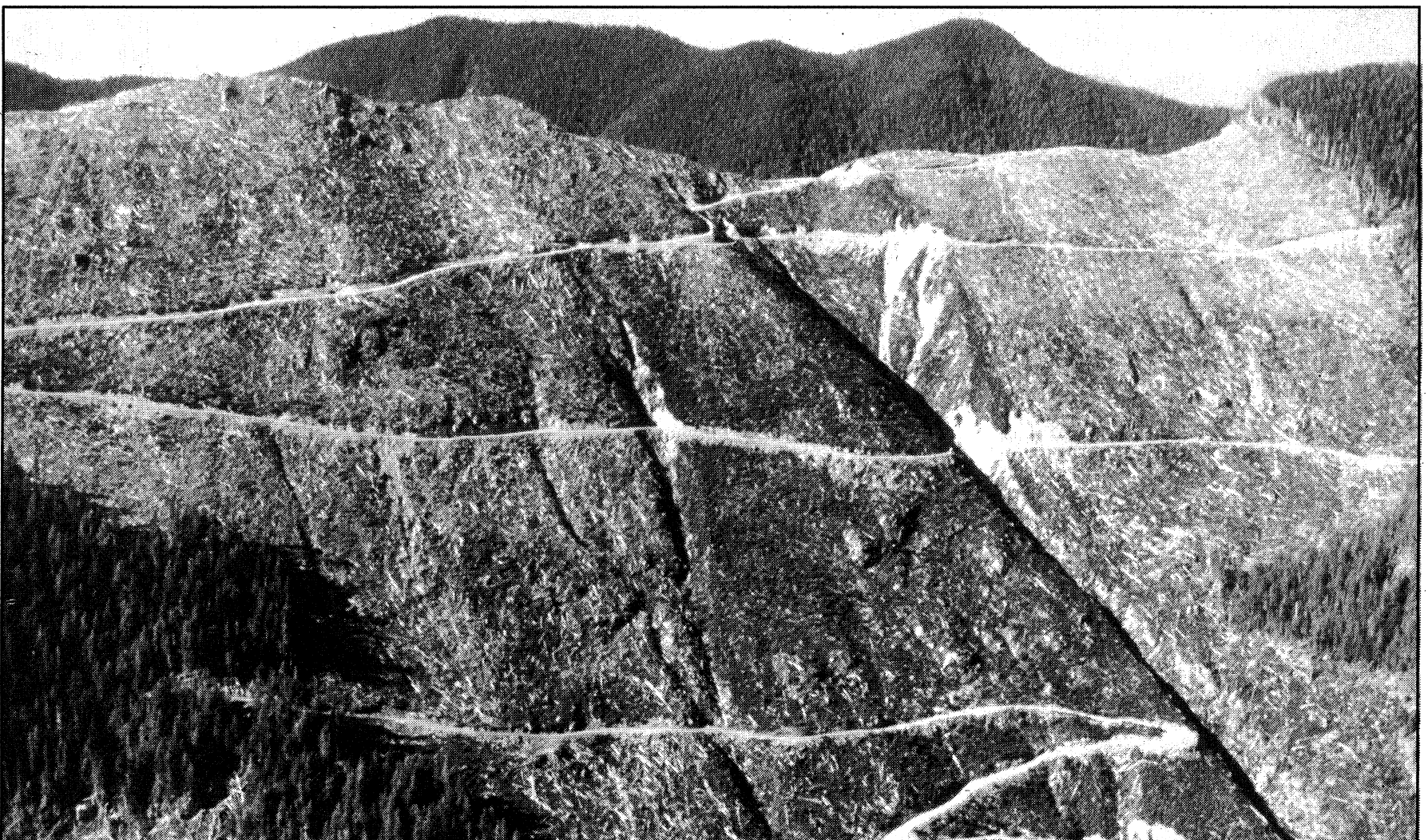
a profit last year) But no forests west of the Cascades were included, and tellingly, not a single forest in the state of Washington, speaker Foley's cutting-grounds, made the list. Nor was it clear that logging would not quickly resume if trees were sold for "market value."

However, a bill was introduced in the Senate that would eliminate the \$100-million-dollar log export subsidy. While encouraging, it does not ban exports, and will not measurably slow a multi-billion dollar industry. The export issue is, in large part, controlled by the most powerful lobby in Washington, DC: the Japanese. It is estimated that Japan spends over one billion dollars annually furthering its agenda in Congress. Any attempt to control exports as opposed to banning them, will likely fail.

As far as the Northwest is concerned, it appears that the government is going to reward decades of bad management and denial, greed and political corruption. The timber industry will be supplied with more of the object of its addiction. The Forest Service will treat the ailing forests with more disease. It's much less than we had hoped for.

President Clinton was, as he has shown in the past, charismatic, articulate, and well-informed. What he has not shown since his election however, is the will or ability to stand for his declared principles against the tide of special interests. That, perhaps, is the most troubling thing of all.

Nonetheless, we will build on the good-faith efforts of the participants to find solutions that compromise neither people nor forests.



Erosion on steep slopes, Willamette National Forest, OR

photo by Trygve Steen

Don't Expect an Apology



The Olympic National Forest, WA

photo by LightHawk

Post-Summit Analysis

by Jim Britell

Any event that focuses the attention of the whole country on the problems of Northwest forests is a positive thing. That the forest issue is more than just jobs vs. owls was clearly established. Certainly the timber spokespeople wanted to focus on jobs and mill closures, but the whole range of silly anti-endangered species arguments that have characterized this debate were thankfully missing. Most importantly, no one from the timber side denied the need to protect ancient forests.

Regrettably there was no real discussion of the final resolution to this problem, and **the scientists were sent off on what promises to be another search for the non-fattening hot-fudge sundae.**

But this summit, and other events of the last few months, have created a strong possibility that selected ancient forests and roadless areas will be protected. The forest summit overshadowed the recent listing of the Marbled Murrelet, but this elusive seabird, which requires ancient forest habitat, will have an impact far beyond that of the Northern spotted owl. Also, the tragic decline of the salmon has finally brought fishermen, and state and federal agencies to a new awareness of the need to protect riparian habitat. They are both now, for the first time, speaking out forcefully for the need to slow logging near rivers and on steep slopes.

The outcome of the summit will probably be to bring all these threads together in a plan that allows all the parties to see just where they stand. The uncertainty of the situation has plagued both sides. **Large permanent set-asides are overdue and inevitable,** especially now that the federal regulatory process begins to reassert its function after 12 years where essentially, in the view of many federal judges, the agencies that were supposed to enforce the laws systematically broke them.

The solution that eventually emerges will probably be a combination of recovery plans for the various species, and protection of roadless areas--at least to the extent of not building new roads. Selective cutting and thinning will be recommended, and some sort of log export restriction will be imposed (most likely a change in tax and export subsidies). Finally, restoration projects will be undertaken to begin healing the damage presently out there.

Despite the positive signs emerging from the summit, some of the activists were left with an unsettled feeling. For many years local grassroots activists were forced to deal with Forest Service and BLM managers who were engaged in what Judge Dwyer, who imposed the current injunctions, tactfully called deliberate and systematic lawbreaking. Many activists hoped that the ecosystem unraveling created by the collusion of the timber industry, federal land managers, and local politicians would finally be exposed for the whole country to see. Alas, it was not.

Some forest activists believe we need to publicize the fact that forest devastation is driven by large corporations externalizing their costs of doing business, i.e. pushing them off on weaker groups like fishermen, small communities, and taxpayers. **They would have liked the President to acknowledge that activists have been performing the oversight, the monitoring and enforcement of environmental laws during the Reagan/Bush years--** often at considerable cost, and even risk, to themselves.

Sometimes it's best in public policy debates to accept the fact that mistakes were made, and go forward without assessing guilt. This is possible only when the parties have agreed on a new path. But from viewing the industry ads on TV, and listening to their spokespeople on talk shows, it's hard to see where they admit that they have ever made any mistakes. Likewise, if the Forest Service has changed its

approach to forest management since Clinton's election it certainly has not been visible to anyone around here.

The subliminal message of the summit was that the timber industry is somehow put upon and just trying to do its job, and that the environmental activists are guilty of some kind of excess. One could sense this from the reluctant and somewhat perfunctory way the President introduced Andy Kerr compared with the way he deferred to timber executives.

If public policy issues depend on a serious sorting of facts before recommendations can be made, **the Administration might have better spent its time in a private meeting with Judge Dwyer.** Dwyer did his fact finding under rules of evidence in a court of law subject to cross examination and rebuttal. He already reviewed and disposed of much of the misinformation that abounded at the summit on exports, log price trends, how much forest is left, and why mills really closed.

There seemed to be a series of unstated assumptions at work during the summit. (1) The administration was willing to acknowledge that the forest problem is about more than just spotted owls, but it is no more willing to publicly surface the underlying issues than its predecessors. (2) Facts are whatever anybody says. Anybody can say anything. (3) Preservationist and devastationist arguments were treated as if each were equally valid. (4) Don't expect an apology. **We may get a solution of the immediate problems, but don't hold your breath waiting for an airing of the issues that caused them.**

In that respect the forest summit resembles the recent riots in LA. The fires have been doused, but the underlying problems still exist. Unless the administration shows a willingness to deal with them, expect similar forest crises to erupt around the nation.

The Cost of Free Trade

Hidden



Exports -- Longview, WA

photo by Elizabeth Feryl



Shelton Sustained Yield Unit, Olympic NF, WA

photo by Tryg-Sky/LightHawk

Environmentalists are fond of saying: "Think globally, act locally;" the implication being that if you plug enough local leaks, eventually you may prevent global flooding.

Resource extractors have reversed that logic under the guise of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Their thinking is that if you want rape locally, act globally. Pass a law--binding to Canada, the U.S., and Mexico--that overrides local, state,

Under NAFTA, decades of hard-won environmental progress could be rolled back as impediments to unfettered trade.

and national environmental laws, health and safety regulations, and import/export standards. A law that discourages resource conservation, endorses subsidies for fossil fuel production, and permits an international panel of "trade experts," deliberating in secret, to void democratic environmental decisions made by voters. In short, legalize a corporate ravager's Christmas list.

Under NAFTA, decades of hard-won environmental progress could be rolled back as impediments to unfettered trade. The public, for example, may think it's unnecessary to grind dolphins to pulp when fishing for tuna. In fact, the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection

Act prohibits the "quisenarting" of dolphins. But two years ago, this law was ruled to be an "illegal" trade barrier by a panel of trade officials accountable to no one.

The public may be in favor of having our government promote environmentally favorable products and technologies through its procurement policies. But Canada has threatened to challenge U.S. government requirements to purchase recycled paper on the grounds that Canada has limited recycling capacity and is therefore being discriminated against by procurement policies that favor conservation. Under NAFTA, encouraging preservation is regarded as discrimination against the wasteful.

Likewise, health and safety standards are viewed as trade impediments. In its current form NAFTA would allow foreign nations to challenge U.S. food labelling requirements and laws limiting pesticides as illegal barriers to trade.

Additionally, NAFTA usurps a nation's right to control the export of its natural resources. Controlling log exports, for example, has an immediate and obvious impact on the rate at which forests are logged; and on the ability of communities to develop sustainable economies. But any attempt to limit or halt log exports could be challenged as obstructionist.

Under the rules of free trade as embodied in NAFTA, with few exceptions, all NAFTA countries are required to provide other NAFTA countries with the same access to its natural resources as it

allows its own citizens and domestic industry.

By removing the authority of federal and state governments to control foreign investment in the resource sector, or to limit the export of vital natural resources, NAFTA will actually accelerate the unsustainable patterns of resource exploitation that

Taken to its logical conclusion, all conservation measures potentially distort supply and demand...

have already led to serious crises in virtually every resource sector, from coastal fisheries to forests, water and energy.

Taken to its logical conclusion, all conservation measures potentially distort supply and demand and may therefore be vulnerable to attack as unfair trading practices. The fundamental problem with applying the principles of free trade to the resource sector is this: If governments are to establish sustainable resource management policies, they must have full control over foreign investment in the resource sector, and must also be able to control the rate at which vital natural resources are extracted and exported. Under NAFTA neither is possible.

For much too long, our countries have been mining our forests and other resources as if they were limitless rather than the precious natural "capital" upon which future generations must depend. The rush to exploit natural resources has

created well-documented shortages and environmental abuses, from the cesspool that is the U.S./Mexican border, to threatened Northwest fisheries and the deforestation of Vancouver Island. At the very moment when the imperatives to change our course could not be clearer, NAFTA and the free trade agenda seeks to lock in the failed practices that have created our present predicament.

If rules of trade are to serve rather than undermine the principles of sustainable development, NAFTA must be fundamentally overhauled to make a virtue, rather than a sin, of resource conservation.

This article was compiled from documents provided by Citizens Trade Campaign and Greenpeace.

To voice your concerns, write or call your members of Congress. Tell them you don't want NAFTA to undermine our country's health, safety, and environmental laws. U.S. Capitol Switchboard: 202-224-3121

Or for more information contact the Citizens Trade Campaign, 600 Maryland Ave. SW, Suite 202 West, Washington, DC 20024. (202) 554-1102

Greenpeace, 1436 U Street NW Washington DC 20009 (202) 462-1177

Arson in the National Forests

Need a job?
Got a match?
No problem.



Photo by Trygve Steen

Firetrail

by Mike Weiss

“When you have eliminated the impossible,” said Sherlock Holmes, “whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.” A century later, the art of detecting wildland arson relies on just such negative reasoning. Holmesian methodology was how,

“I recently heard a saying,” Bennett adds. “The blacker the forest, the greener the paycheck.”

for example, state investigator Paul Bertagna concluded that last summer’s Barker Fire, which scorched 5,600 acres of brushy timberland near Hayfork, Calif., was the handiwork of an arsonist, and one with a purpose.

Bertagna, an officer with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention, located the origin of the fire in a blackened patch of brush three feet in diameter near Barker Creek. Bertagna knew that somebody had been trying to start a fire near Hayfork

all summer. There had been about a dozen attempts, all on steep, fire-encouraging slopes with poor access, and every one lit by a device—probably a pocket lighter—that could be carried away, leaving no clues. Until the Barker Fire, all the attempts had been quickly suppressed or had never taken off.

Bertagna concluded not only that the fire was arson, but also that it had been set to create employment in the recession-hit Hayfork area. Mills had been closing in the densely wooded, sparsely populated Shasta and Trinity counties, costing the region an estimated 1,250 jobs. As the logging industry declined, fear and anger were palpable. A fire would offer work; both fighting the fire and repairing the damage it caused. But more importantly, there would be work logging the dead trees that the fire left in its wake.

Trees can be “salvaged” for one of two reasons: because they are burned or because they are sick. In either case, the trees may be logged with less environmental review, and for this reason, salvage sales have become the logging industry’s preferred method of acquiring increasingly protected federal timber. In 1988, salvage sales of

fire-damaged or diseased trees accounted for 20 percent of the timber logged from U.S. Forest Service (USFS) lands. By 1992, largely because of an overall

In 1992 there were over 1,100 wildland arson fires in California alone, up 280 from the previous year.

decrease in timber sales, salvages made up 55 percent of the total.

The massive Fountain Fire, which burned simultaneously with the Barker Fire about sixty-five miles to the east, blackened 65,000 acres—but created a boomtown atmosphere. Roseburg Forest Products, which had announced that it would be closing its Anderson sawmills and throwing 450 employees out of work, cancelled the closure to salvage 25,000 acres of charred but still-valuable timber. In the wake of the fire, there was also work for erosion control crews, linemen, and road builders.

As much as \$1 million a day is spent controlling a fire, points out Douglas Bennett, fire chief of

Weaverville, Trinity County’s seat of government. “Much of this money filters back into the community. A firefighting equipment owner can earn enough to make it through the rest of the year.” Suppressing forest fires in California [alone] during 1992 [cost] over \$100 million.

“I recently heard a saying,” Bennett adds. “The blacker the forest, the greener the paycheck.”

In 1992 there were over 1,100 wildland arson fires in California alone, up 280 from the previous year. In Oregon’s timber-dependent Klamath County, wildland arson has become so common that a federal and state task force was formed to study the problem. As some environmentalists put it: If the government won’t let you log a living tree, get them to call it dead; if they won’t call it dead, burn it.

[According to] Brian Hunt of the Oregon-based Association of Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics, “salvage logging has become the principal means of meeting timber limits. It is making up the cut. For the Forest Service to reward illegal conduct is inappropriate and a very dangerous public policy.”

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Mike Weiss is a staff reporter for *West* magazine, the Sunday magazine of the *San Jose Mercury News*, which published a similar version of this story. This version has been edited.

[Additionally, salvage] facilitates building logging roads into roadless areas where there is a sale. Once the road is in, it effectively precludes the forest from being declared an official wilderness area, thus leaving it open for future logging.

[The rush to get the cut out has even produced] the increasingly popular "pre-salvage" salvages--healthy trees cut down because they were in danger of becoming ill. A December U.S. Forest Service memo told rangers in eastern Oregon that "even if a sale is totally green, as long as one board comes off that would qualify as salvage...it should be called salvage. It's a political thing."

One particular instance of salvage logging did not sit well with Eric Forsman, a USFS biologist in Corvallis, Oregon. He told [a local newspaper] that salvage logging the 9,700 acres of protected northern spotted owl habitat that had been burned by the arson-caused Warner Creek Fire might provide incentive for setting other fires in owl preserves as a way to open them to logging.

The timber industry reacted with fury, and the Forest Service chief Dale Robertson reprimanded the biologist. Forsman was forced to write an abject apology to "all the honest, hard-working loggers."

[Regardless,] California Department of Forestry and USFS officials, and businesspeople all talked to me about how economic incentive has made the relation between salvage and job-hunting fires common knowledge. People take it for granted and talk about it among themselves in the mountain towns.

Don Williams, a Trinity County Mental Health Services psychologist [observes,] "It all gets blurred. Nobody likes a fire. Everybody wants a fire."

Few wildland arson cases ever even come to trial--and occasionally the USFS seems reluctant to acknowledge them at all. Oregon's Warner Creek Fire, for instance, was originally determined to be arson, possibly set to create logging work. It was, after all, in an area where it's not unheard of for environmentalists to find spotted owls nailed to their doors.

The arson determination went unchallenged until Willamette National Forest Supervisor Darrell Kenops decided to salvage more than ten times the amount of lumber his own scientists said would be environmentally sound. When the public questioned the wisdom of not only rewarding arson but rewarding it so richly, Kenops decided that the fire might not have been deliberately set after all, despite his own investigators' findings.

After another public outcry, accusing Kenops of trying to defuse the issue, he reversed himself and admitted that it was an arson-set fire. But that's all. Two years after the fire, investigators refuse to

ARSON

"Nobody likes a fire. Everybody wants a fire."



photo by Trygve Steen

speculate on the motive of the crime or release any information. The investigation, as they say, is ongoing.

Whether intentionally or not, the policies of the Forest Service, the bottom-line mentality of the timber industry, and the desperation of loggers and small contractors have combined in the American West to create an atmosphere in which job-hunting fires make perfect economic sense.

The rush to get the cut out has even produced the increasingly popular 'pre-salvage' salvages--healthy trees cut down because they were in danger of becoming ill.

Beat the Devil

by Alexander Cockburn

American environmentalism is predicated on trade-offs, as brokered with business by the big environmental groups, by rich foundations such as Rockefeller or Pew that back these groups, and by government.

The theory of the trade-off is that inside every seemingly irreconcilable antagonism there's a dormant compromise awaiting the reviving kiss of the mediator. Sometime between the Forest Conference held in Portland, OR on April 2

[Industry will] extort every ounce of drama from the bogus owls-versus-jobs issue.

and early June, the Clinton Administration will offer a mix of executive orders and legislation addressing forest issues in the Pacific Northwest.

Starting with the one-day dog and pony show in Portland, the timber giants have both a short- and a long-term plan. Restrict the agenda to public forests west of the Cascades, extort every last ounce of drama from the bogus owls-versus-jobs issue, demand the opening of tracts of national forest and the carving of roads to reach them. Above all, demand "sufficiency."

"Sufficiency" and "certainty" are legal terms embodying the corporate raver's eternal dream of being immune to court challenge. "Sufficiency" language opening areas to logging would lift court injunctions and suspend environmental laws governing Forest Service management, so loggers would be given a green light "notwithstanding any other provision of law." Of course laws such as the Endangered Species Act have been prime weapons of forest savers, and the timber industry has long yearned to spike those weapons. In 1989 Senator Mark Hatfield of Oregon got "certainty" for one year on forest lands, including the largest continuous ponderosa pine forest in the country, which was duly destroyed.

The focus on the Pacific Northwest is somewhat (indeed dangerously) misleading. True, forest defenders

are best organized here, and the industry's ravages of the past few years in this region have been most widely publicized. But the timber giants have already essentially abandoned or are preparing to abandon the Pacific Northwest, with its fractious activists. New targets of opportunity lie to the east, in the Mississippi basin, southern Illinois, through the west side of the Appalachians and in the flatlands of the South, where quicker-growing plants than redwood or Douglas fir--pine, kenaf, or hemp--can satisfy the demand for fiber.

The future for the American timber industry is in fiber; raw material for what are called engineered construction products. You don't need to wipe out a forest to have lavatory paper. Grow kenaf or hemp and even get Jesse Helms on your side by telling him it could be a substitute for tobacco. Throw in the word "subsidy" and his eyes will gleam. As Harry Merlo, head of Louisiana Pacific, so beautifully put it, "America's last vast forest

The future for the American timber industry is in fiber...

is waste paper, and you don't have to worry about spotted owls," or rowdy preservationists.

The industry, as Mark Winstein of Save America's Forests put it to me recently, "looks at the U.S. as one province of the world. They have an integrated strategy, way out in front of the environmentalists, who tend to organize regionally. And the industry tends to move where people and activists aren't around, off in the inner basin from the eastern Cascades to the western Appalachians, where the main economic-entity in an area doesn't meet with much challenge."

On the other side of the table at the Forest Conference the preservationists outlined their priorities. Save the last of the ancient forest of the Pacific Northwest (10 percent still remaining); ban log exports, whereby anywhere from a quarter to half of all wood cut in the region ends up being shipped across the Pacific as minimally processed material, denying

workers here the opportunity to earn the value added; open up discussion of the so-called east side national forests, those that have been savaged by the timber companies east of the Cascades in Oregon and Washington; stop road building in national forests; and end below-cost subsidies to the timber industry, which for years has flourished on publicly subsidized infrastructure such as those same roads thoughtfully provided for them by the Forest Service. (There is, however, a danger in the neoliberal full-value approach,

The Administration has been displaying predictable zeal to assuage all parties.

since it suggests a rational pricing structure for public lands to be logged.)

But beyond this set of core demands there is fierce disagreement along the spectrum stretching from the environmental establishment through such organizations as the Western Ancient Forest Campaign, Save America's Forests, and [The Native Forest Council]. This is where we enter the shadow of the trade-off.

The Administration has been displaying predictable zeal to assuage all parties. Clinton has had kind words for "sufficiency," Gore speaks of environmental stewardship in the most exalted terms, Babbitt has stated that he looks forward to the Administration "lifting the edges of injunctions" to provide timber for rural mills in the Northwest.

There are some very heavy hitters in Congress who are no friends of trees, starting with Westerners like Foley and extending to the potent Bobby Byrd, who runs the Senate Appropriations Committee and has a solicitous eye for the pulp and chip mills in his region.

The timber industry takes its enemies seriously, and in the 1992 elections targeted such friends of the forest as Representatives Jim Jontz of Indiana, Gerry Sikorski of Minnesota, Peter Kostmayer of Pennsylvania, all of whom went down to defeat. As one preservationist remarked to me last week, "Clinton will do what he can, short of risking his re-election." This is at least an improvement on the Republican administrations of the past twelve years, whose views were well represented by a Reagan

official who said in 1984, "Old growth forests remind me of an old folks' home, just waiting to die."

There are those who hope that the Portland conference will be followed by executive orders curtailing logging of old growth trees west of the Cascades, diverting the Forest Service's road budget into restoration, designating critical watersheds and so forth. Others hope that there will be meaningful economic conversion assistance for timber workers and a serious attempt to figure out what the nation should do about its forest resources, ecosystems and bioregions on the edge of the twenty-first century.

The rhythms of the trade-off are antipathetic to all such long-term visions. The trade-off means a preserve here against the lifting of an injunction there, diminished protection, "sufficiency" language, license to rape and pillage all the way from the Cascades to the Atlantic.

The Forest Conference took place in Portland because while campaigning last year Clinton promised the woodworkers that he'd go

"Clinton will do what he can, short of risking his re-election."

there. It was the concession the labor unions in Oregon and Washington got from the candidate when George Bush was trying to win their support. But the Northwest focus carries a price. Forests are a national issue, and any summit about them should entail more than trees. As Huey Johnson secretary of resources under Governor Jerry Brown in the 1970's, put it in the *Sunday San Francisco Chronicle/Examiner* for March 28:

"It's a mistake to call a summit to discuss one resource pulled out of the larger ecosystem context. The interrelated issues of forests, fisheries, water, soil, air, wildlife and people are complex. They must be approached in a comprehensive way if we are to solve the problems. If we have learned anything about resources it is that they relate like the parts of a clock. If you tinker too much with one piece, the clock stops keeping the correct time."

A longer version of this article appeared in the April 19, 1993 edition of The Nation.

R

Recommendations

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G

The Native Forest Council recommends the following books and publications as excellent sources of information about environmental issues and the monied special-interest politics that have come to dominate national policy-making.

Journals**Earth Island Journal**

Published by Earth Island Institute
David Brower's organization provides "Local news from around the world." From "Creating a Sustainable Netherlands," to saving sea turtles in Costa Rica, subjects range widely and include articles on economics, politics and, of course, the environment.

Earth Island Institute, 300 Broadway, Suite 28
San Francisco, CA 94133 (415) 788-3666

Forest Watch

Published by Cascade Holistic
Economic Consultants
Seventeen-year veteran of the forest issue, Randal O'Toole and six regional editors report from around the nation on public lands abuse, and on the economic incentives necessary to reform federal land management agencies.

CHEC, 3758 SE Milwaukie
Portland, OR 97202 (503) 234-4349

High Country News

Published by High Country Fndt.
It calls itself "A paper for people who care about the West," and it is filled with excellent writing and thoughtful feature articles on environmental issues relevant to western mountain and desert states.

High Country News, PO Box 1090
Paonia, CO 81428 (303) 527-4898

Transitions

Published by the Inland Empire
Public Lands Council
Superbly researched, John Osborn's publication provides a historical context for issues surrounding the forest crisis. From railroad land grants, to political intrigues, history and ecology converge in the pages of **Transitions**.

IEPLC, W. 315 Mission
Spokane, WA 99201 (509) 327-1699

Wild Earth

Published by the Cenozoic
Society, Inc.
Dave Forman's new venture brings together some of the most creative and literate minds in the environmental movement. Lengthy feature articles explore issues of deep ecology, Big Wilderness proposals, movement strategies, and environmental ethics.

Wild Earth, PO Box 492, Canton, NY 13617
(315) 379-9940

Books**Who will tell the People: the betrayal of American democracy**

by William Greider
Simon & Schuster

Greider writes: "The blunt message of this book is that American democracy is in much deeper trouble than most people wish to acknowledge. Behind the reassuring facade, the regular election contests and so forth, the substantive meaning of self-government has been hollowed out. What exists behind the formal shell is a systematic breakdown of the shared civic values we call democracy." A thoughtful and troubling book.

America: What Went Wrong?

by Donald L. Barlett and
James B. Steele
Andrews and McMeel

This book is an expanded version of a nine-part series originally published in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in October 1991, and later serialized on PBS by Bill Moyers. The two Pulitzer Prize-winning reporters trace recent political and economic events that have had a ruinous effect on both the middle class and the nation. From the shifting of the tax burden, to the S&L rip-off; from pension-fund raiders, to an indifferent Congress; this book answers the questions so many American's voice today: What went wrong?

Still the Best Congress Money Can Buy

by Philip M. Stern
Regnery Gateway

An updated and revised edition of Stern's earlier expose on the dominant role of special-interest money in the voting habits of our elected representatives. As Senator William Proxmire says in the foreword: "Special interests are buying your national government. They're paying millions for it. And they're getting billions of dollars of rip-offs in return"

What You Can Do!

*The question is not: How can I make a difference?
But: Do I like the difference I'm making?*

Join

Join the Native Forest Council. We are a national, non-profit grassroots organization providing solutions to the forest crisis that compromise neither forests nor people.

Contribute

Many people still do not know that logging is allowed on national forests. But only an informed and concerned public will be able to pressure Congress for meaningful protection of public lands. Help support the NFC's Media Campaign to Protect National Forests. The Native Forest Council is a non-profit, tax-deductible 501(c)(3) organization.

Write / Call

Write your congressional delegation today. Ask each of them to support an end to logging of national forests and the introduction of the National Forest Protection Acts. Or call the congressional switchboard at (202) 224-3121. Other key contacts:

Kika de la Garza, D, TX-Chr.
House Agriculture Committee
Room: 1301 LHOB
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-2171

George Miller, D, CA-Chr.
House Natural Resources Comm.
Room: 1324 LHOB
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-2761

William Natcher, D, KY-Chr.
House Appropriations Comm.
Room: H-218 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-2771

Robert Byrd, D, WV-Chr.
Senate Appropriations Comm.
Room: S-128 Capitol
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-3471

Max Baucus, D, MT-Chr.
Sen. Environment & Public Works
Room: SD-456
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-6176

Patrick J. Leahy, D, VT-Chr.
Ag., Nutrition & Forestry
Room: SR-328A
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-2035

President Bill Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 456-1414

Bruce Babbitt
Secretary of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240
(202) 208-7351

Mike Espy
Secretary of Agriculture
14th & Independence SW
Washington, DC 20250
(202) 447-3631

About the Native Forest Council

The Native Forest Council is a non-profit, tax-deductible organization founded by a group of business and professional people alarmed by the willful destruction of our national forests. We believe that a sound economy and a sound environment are not incompatible and that current forestry practices are devastating to both.

Therefore, it is the mission of the Native Forest Council to provide visionary leadership, to ensure the integrity of native forest ecosystems, without compromising people or forests.

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Forest Voice

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Forest Voice is published by the Native Forest Council, P.O. Box 2171, Eugene, Oregon, 97402, (503) 688-2600, FAX (503) 461-2156.

The Forest Voice is sent free to all members of the Native Forest Council. The cost of U.S. membership is \$35 annually. Bulk orders of the Forest Voice and Primer are available for \$25 per 100 plus shipping. A complimentary copy is available on request.

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Publisher Timothy Hermach

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ISSN 1069-2002

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