

Protecting Public Forestlands



ForestVoice

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In this issue:

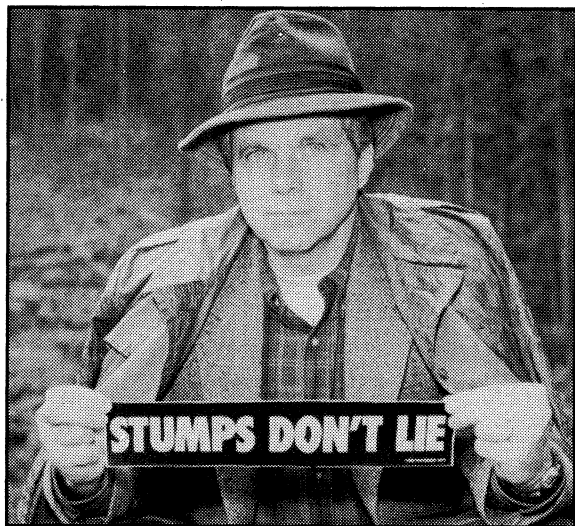
- *Art Contest: America's forests through the eyes of New York students (see pg. 2)*
- *The Clinton Solution: No runs, no hits, and lots of errors*

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From the Executive Director



Timothy Hermach

Pay No Attention to the Man Behind the Curtain

The first six months of the Clinton presidency, as approval polls reflect, have been a growing disappointment. The appearance of confusion comes, in part, from Clinton's fixated search for the center of each issue. As each position is negotiated and each ideal compromised, solutions to important issues are gutted of substance. America's forests, and all that they shelter and provide, are the latest victims of that search.

The recently announced forest summit results are another bead in an expanding necklace of Clinton's broken promises. During the Summit, Clinton had promised that the results would be "scientifically sound and legally responsible." They are neither. In fact, Option 9--the Clinton

choice--(see the Clinton Solution, pg 6) was not even among the options originally developed by the scientific panel. The White House requested the eleventh-hour addition when it became clear that none of the eight original options--based on science not politics--could possibly allow enough old-growth logging to please the timber industry.

The Clinton Plan may prove contemptuous of legal criteria as well since it only provides a "medium viability" for most endangered species. In fact, Clinton wants to permit selected logging in so-called reserves which, in the hands of the Forest Service, obviates concerns for forest health and habitat and turns these lands into little more than logging reserves.

If the Clinton plan does not comply with the provisions of the Endangered Species Act and other environmental laws, it will fail to satisfy the requirements of Judge Dwyer's injunction against timber sales in the Northwest. To circumvent these laws and override the injunction, the President would have to slide this proposal through Congress, creating new laws which supersede the old. So in spite of promises to devise a forest plan that meets all existing laws, the Administration may simply change or compromise the law to accommodate the resumption of native-forest logging, nullifying citizen's appeals and judicial review in the process.

But public radio commentator Daniel Schorr warns; "The center that Clinton is moving toward is a mirage, disappearing as he nears it," which may well account for the President's declining fortunes at the polls.

The collapsible Mr. Clinton, who assumed office waving the banner of "change," sadly reminds me of the Wizard of Oz. Unmasked, the Wizard shouts: "Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain. The great and powerful Oz has spoken." We are beginning to see more and more of the man behind the curtain and he's looking less and less powerful, and his rhetoric is increasingly easy for special interests to ignore.

Continued on page 5

New York Artists

Readers will notice some extraordinary artwork featured in this edition of the Forest Voice. The idea came from the creative mind of Valerie Carrigan, an art teacher at Webster High School in Webster, New York. She taught her class a unit on deforestation and asked her students to apply their artistic skills to illustrate the issue. She then called the NFC and asked whether we would consider publishing one of her student's drawings. When we received the artwork, we were quite literally overwhelmed. The work was so imaginative and dramatic that we could not, in good conscience, choose but one. All of the works appear on the following pages. Our thanks to Ms. Carrigan and her fine young artists for their special contribution to this issue.

CONTENTS

Who Represents the American People?.....3	Free Trade: NOT!.....12
Before slicing up the pie, don't forget who owns it.	by Michael Donnelly. The Japanese are quietly taking over the North American timber industry, using the U.S. as a resource colony.
It's Still the Exports, Stupid.....4	Then and Now.....14
by Jack Anderson and Michael Binstein. America is winning the trade war in log exports. So why are we keeping it a secret?	by Michael Frome. Government agencies haven't changed much in 20 years: "Yes, we believe in public involvement, but we gotta cut those trees."
The Clinton Solution.....6	Architects Protest Commercial Logging....17
by Victor Rozek. Well, Clinton did keep one promise: Nobody likes his solution.	The American Institute of Architects sends a letter of protest to President Clinton.
Timber Crooks.....8	An "Unhealthy" Forest is not Sick.....18
by Alan Pittman. A lot of timber is stolen from national forests. What is the Forest Service doing about it? Not much.	by Edward Flattau. Disease and insects drive forest succession and should not be used as excuses to raze public lands.
Art Imitating Life.....10	The Road to Reformation.....19
Students from Webster, New York share their talent and their vision.	Sierra Club members have an opportunity to strengthen the Club's forest policy.

*A Letter to the
Editor of
The Washington Post
asks: Who represents
the American people?*

**“They work
for us,
after all.”**

Editor:

A recent news story reviewing the confrontation between the timber industry and environmentalists points out the difficulty of solving the conflict by observing that “Washington is littered with the wreckage of previous attempts to satisfy loggers and environmentalists, Congress and the executive branch and the courts.” While this list is certainly inclusive of many groups, it leaves out the single most important group of people who must be satisfied in this issue and suggests a general viewpoint of who the aggrieved parties are here, which may be causing part of the problem. Simply put, the article does not name the American people as a whole.

The ancient forests are not just a collection of old trees being cut down by timber companies on a few million remaining acres of land in the Pacific Northwest. First and foremost, these forests are the property of the American people; they are publicly owned trees on public lands. Because I am an American citizen, they are my trees and my children’s trees and your trees and your family’s trees. We have all owned them ever since they became part of the public lands a century ago.

One would presume that because we are property owners our permission would be required before damage is done to our own lands. Yet, while we employ hundreds of hired government workers, rangers, supervisors, secretaries of departments, senators, representatives, and even chief executives to administer and protect the public welfare, they have not bothered to ask us just how we want our public lands administered.

How about a comprehensive public poll that offers the American people the opportunity to direct U.S. policy regarding our public lands and the trees on them? I can hazard a guess about the results of such a poll, and it would not look good for the timber industry. Through cost-cutting greed and poor forestry practice, the timber industry denudes the public forests whenever it cuts timber in them.

Imagine that Americans were asked how many of them would agree to have the remaining 10 percent of ancient forests cut and stripped to bare earth. How many would agree to hand our children razed and hacked-up landscapes--lands we are supposed to be the stewards of?

I bet we the people would overwhelmingly demand strong environmental preservation of what remains of our old-growth forests. Isn’t it time our “hired hands” asked us for guidance? They work for us, after all.

*Frank M. Gregorio
Manassas, VA
April 27, 1993*

Still It's [^]the Exports Stupid!

Log Exports Are Felling Northwest Mills

by Jack Anderson and Michael Binstein

**The Washington Post
June 24, 1993**

Japan may be winning the trade war over cars and computers, but the United States practically own the export market in raw logs. Why isn't the Clinton administration, which has been pushing Tokyo to open up its markets, touting this "accomplishment?"

It may relate to the fact that exporting raw logs is trade typical

But even countries such as the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia have grasped the futility of auctioning natural resources...

of Third World economies. But even countries such as the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia have grasped the futility of auctioning natural resources and have refocused on exporting value-added products such as furniture.

Japan desperately needs American logs. They want the pulp, not the final products. Clinton could propose banning log exports as part of the legislation now being drafted by the White House to settle the Pacific Northwest timber dispute. But it is an option Clinton is expected to reject. (Clinton, in fact, reinstated a raw-log export ban but only from federal lands. The ban is largely cosmetic since it does not ban the export of minimally-processed logs - Ed.)

Weyerhaeuser Co. would be a big winner. The timber giant has fought a potential ban for more than a year--fertilizing Congress with \$1,000 fund-raising breakfasts, free John Denver concert tickets and large campaign contributions.

Weyerhaeuser sells 25 percent of its harvest overseas, and Japan is the biggest customer. That has

helped boost the company's profits, which last year soared to \$372 million.

Oregon's sawmill operators see Weyerhaeuser's export-derived profits as a death certificate because that means fewer logs for domestic processing. Hundreds of mills have shut down or scaled back in the last decade, throwing more than 40,000 people out of work.

Rep. Peter A. DeFazio (D-OR) has embarked on his own arm-twisting campaign to curtail timber exports from private lands, claiming credit for the fact that Weyerhaeuser no longer exports any raw logs harvested in Oregon. He may have overstepped a line when he began urging the elimination of timber exports from private lands in Washington.

"I've been threatened by members of the Washington delegation if I raise the issue of private log exports," DeFazio told our associ-

ate Andrew Conte. "They threatened to retaliate against me politically and in other ways because they don't want the issue to [get raised]. They're afraid."

As a Democratic member of the Washington state delegation, Rep. Norman D. Dicks represents

The timber giant has fought a potential ban for more than a year, fertilizing Congress with...large campaign contributions.

longshoremen who load the logs on ships for overseas delivery. He chalks up the political conflicts between congressional delegations to the reality of "capitalism."

"For people who own property, there is a higher return in the export market...That's called

capitalism and that's the way our economic system works--you sell for the highest return."

DeFazio says there are about 15,000 "inefficient" mills thriving inside Japan, while 350 mills are "struggling" to stay afloat in the "timber breadbasket of the world." Japan is clearly protecting its markets from wood-processing competition in the United States.

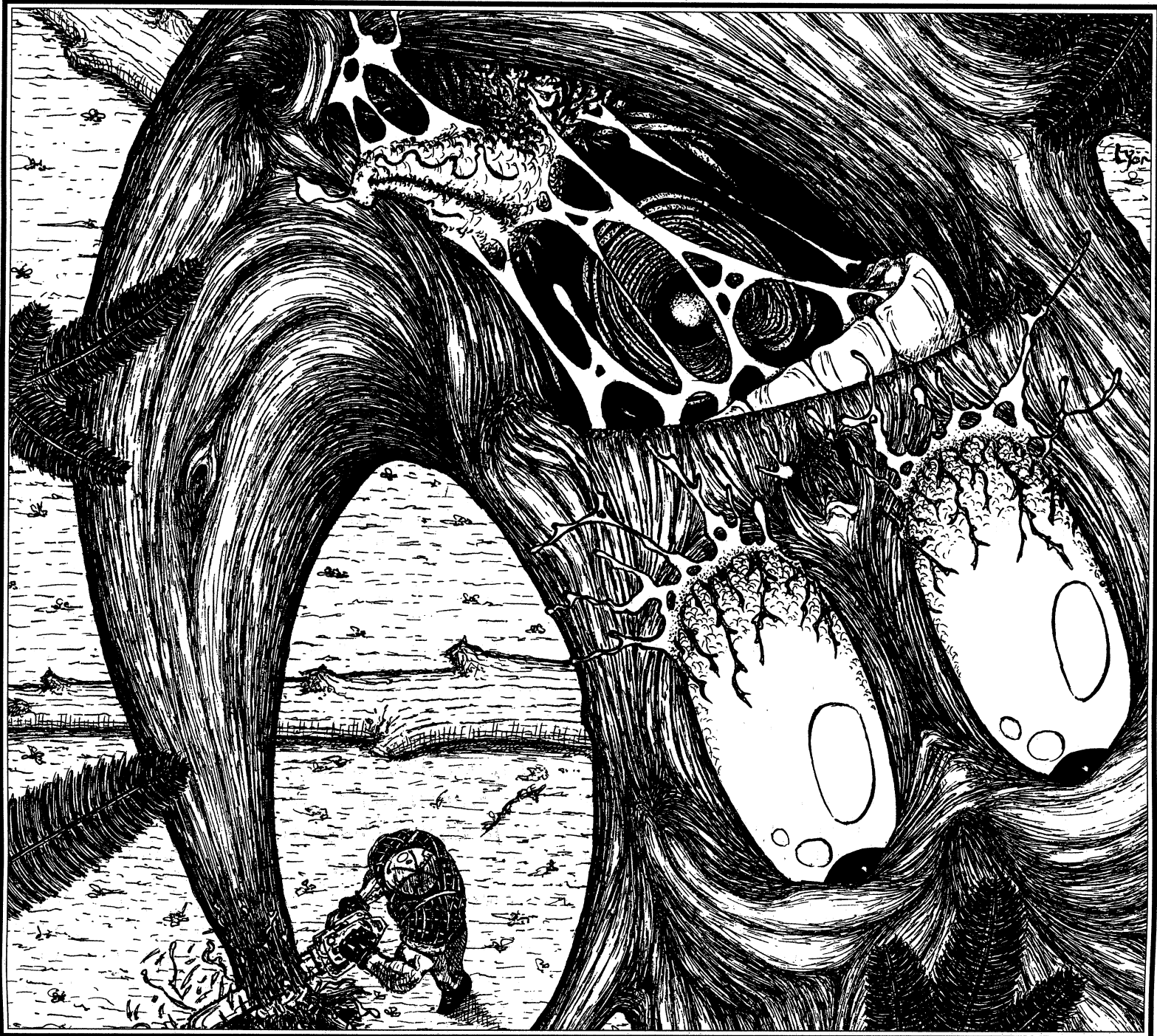
Frank Mendizabal, a Weyerhaeuser spokesman, framed his company's case in starkly financial terms--a departure from the fuzzy "infomercials" in which Weyerhaeuser has invested millions. "Truth is, overseas customers are willing to pay more for logs," Mendizabal said. "We want to protect threatened and endangered species just like everybody else does, but at the same time we realize we have a responsibility to our shareholders and to our employees and to others to have some kind of return on our investment."

The so-called "ban" on raw log exports from federal lands has many loopholes that permit the export of minimally-processed logs. The state of Washington, home of the Olympic National Forest, (below) is the nation's biggest log exporter.



Olympic National Forest, WA

photo by LightHawk



Kerry Lyon

From the Executive Director
continued from page 2

Recently both **TIME** and **Newsweek** featured pictures of the President on their covers. **TIME**'s picture of Clinton was two inches high under a six-inch headline that announced: "The Incredible Shrinking President." **Newsweek** simply asked: "What's Wrong?"

For one thing, the perception that policy is ultimately guided and defined by the people who profit from it. After five decades of documented abuse, overcutting, theft, and the loss of tens-of-billions of dollars of public assets and taxpayer subsidies, our government just voted for more of the same, albeit in smaller increments.

In spite of the plan's glaring failures, the national press is giving the president high marks for "leadership," of all things. There is a general consensus that the issue was very complex, and that, notwithstanding the inadequacy of the solution, the president exhibited exceptional leadership qualities for tackling it. That may be more indicative of our shrinking expectations of leadership than of any actual accomplishment on the president's part.

I suggest that King Solomon would have been remembered far differently if he had actually cut the baby in half to assuage the claimants. Leadership requires, above all, the courage to do what is right even in the face of overwhelming opposition. The evidence has been available for decades: The savaging of the land, the illegal and unsustainable cutting, the avaricious and corrupt politicians, and federal agencies that lie to the American people and reward lawlessness.

These things were clear and indisputable and all of them will continue in some lethal combination to destroy what little is left of the public's forests. We have come to expect precious little from government when "leadership" abandons what is right in favor of what is expedient.

It is my hope that the Clinton plan will finally galvanize the environmental movement. Perhaps we can at last come together and show that we not only have the strength of our convictions, but the conviction to be strong. Clinton's decision is, in part, a reflection of the environmental community's weak performance at the forest summit.

But this should not be a time of defeat or despair, rather a time of clarity. Many of us predicted this outcome based on the constricted forest summit invitation list: for the most part, the people with uncom-

promising solutions were not invited.

Al Gore, when he was still a candid, clear-thinking senator, said; "The current management of our national forests is a national disgrace." He said that "the national forests were not the private preserves of the timber companies." When they were "pillaged for short term profit at the expense of the long term public interest," Gore thought, "the appropriate response is to feel outrage and to hold the political leaders who order this abuse accountable for it." Had they been spoken at the summit, those words might have made a difference. But Al Gore said nothing.

As the euphoria surrounding the Clinton/Gore election recedes, its echoes remind us that Gore was right; the power we seek resides with the people. The ground swell of American awareness is growing fueled by events like the forest summit. Although the public momentarily believes a solution is at hand, that belief will change as specifics of the Clinton plan are made known, and as timber-captive politicians gut the few decent proposals it contains. Nor will the public forget that the national forest system extends beyond the confines of the Northwest. The same abuses that led to the forest summit are being repeated in 122 national forests nationwide. And while the focus is on the Northwest, disastrous

"Wilderness" bills which will devastate the forests of Montana and Idaho are being prepared for introduction in Congress.

The center of an issue that has long been unbalanced by corruption and neglect, is like the center of a donut: nothing of substance there.

America's public forests do not need a coat of green paint to disguise the old status quo; they need to be saved from relentlessly logging. The Clinton solution will change the rate, manner and location of the logging, but it will not stop it. By reducing every solution to its lowest common denominator, Clinton is only able to produce the lowest common good.

In the coming months the Native Forest Council will unveil its response to the Clinton Plan. It will be a campaign that will empower Americans and give them a vote in the use of their national forests. Important issues cannot be abandoned because the powerful have no backbone and the helpless have no choice.



"Clinton has shown optimism and aggressiveness by his willingness to confront a complex and vexing problem that has resisted solution for years."

Germond & Witcover
The Baltimore Evening Sun

With the announcement of Option 9 as the Clinton solution to the Northwest forest crisis, the President made good on at least one of his promises: No one is going to be happy with the solution.

Behind the Headlines

By early June, the scientific committee headed by Jack Ward Thomas, and empaneled by the President to develop a "scientifically sound" plan for Northwest forests, had composed eight options for the President's consideration. The specifics of those options were leaked as trial balloons to see which way the political winds were blowing. The timber industry puffed its disapproval; five of eight of the options would have reduced logging levels to below 1-billion-board-feet (bbf) a year, and an equal number would have stopped all old-growth logging. Industry responded by launching an 11th-hour attack against the scientific panel.

On the 5th of June, a coalition of environmental organizations wrote to Katie McGinty, Director of Office of Environmental Policy, expressing their concerns. "We

have learned that industry and labor have stated that they will oppose any plan that does not provide at least a 2.5-billion-board-foot timber sale level on all federal lands..." the letter stated. "Industry's latest effort appears to have one purpose in mind: to increase logging levels significantly by pressuring the administration to compromise the law, the science or both, despite the President's commitment to do neither."

Industry representatives denied making any such ultimatums, but sources close to the process indicated that administration officials asked the scientists to develop a new management option that would allow more cutting than the eight options previously developed.

The quickly-constructed Option 9 was the result and, in the Clinton fashion, it offers mixed blessings.

Good News/Bad News

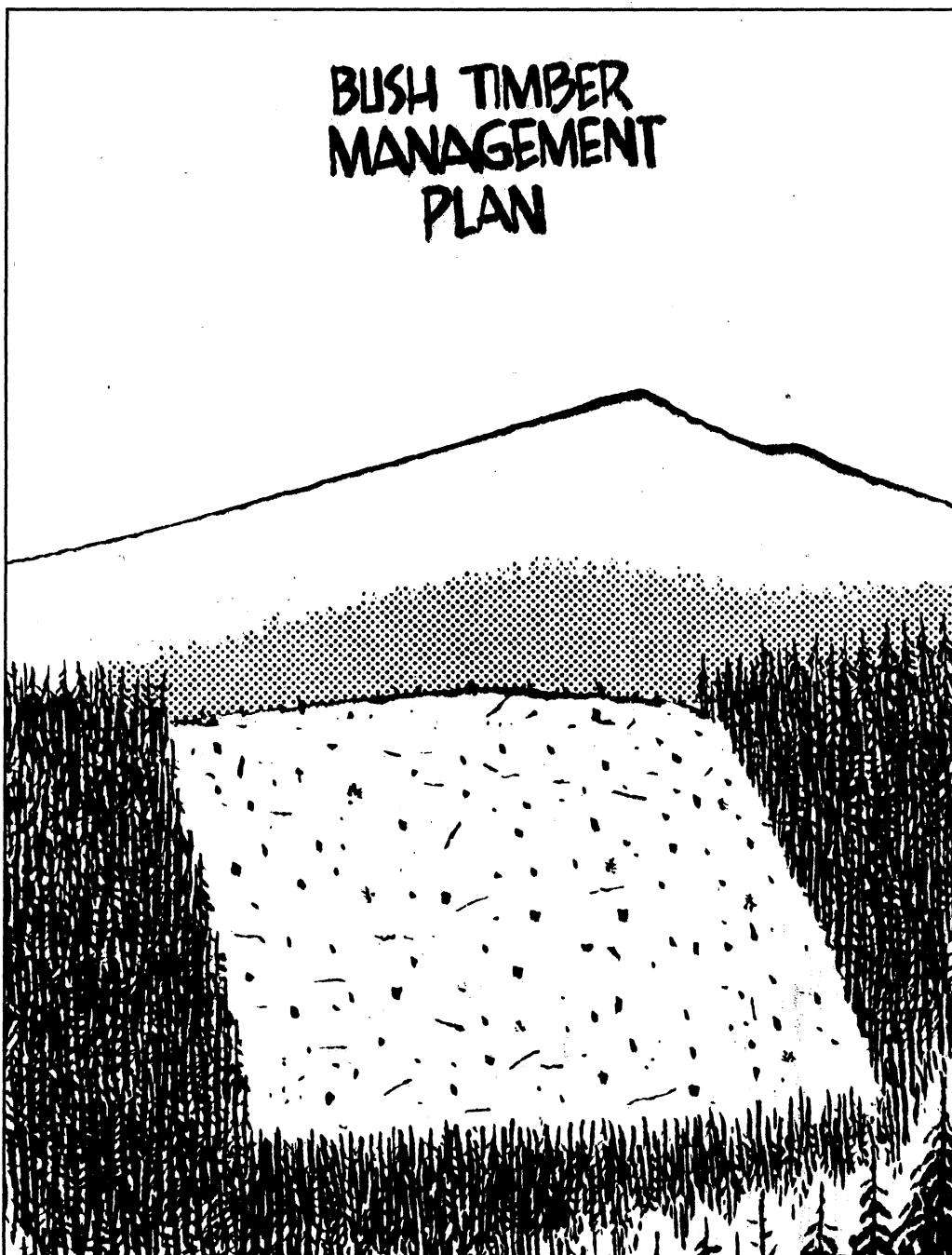
Prior to undergoing the stress of analysis, the President's proposal appears to have some structural merits. First, it would reduce the

westside cut levels to an average of 1.2-bbf over the next 10 years; about one-third of the feeding-frenzy levels of the late 80s. But the plan is front-loaded, with higher logging levels in the first few years of the program. Secretary of the Interior, Bruce Babbitt, stated during the announcement that he felt the timber industry could conservatively get 2-bbf from Northwest forests this year. As one environmentalist quipped, "If Clinton isn't around four years from now, we may never get to the lower levels."

Worse, those cut levels do not include thinning, salvage and arson logging as part of the total allowable cut. Salvage, the logging of trees believed to be dead or dying, but which are in reality often neither, has become the current pretext for getting the cut out. In 1994 salvage will compromise about 30 percent of the entire cut from national forests. In the battered Northern Rockies region, salvage constitutes over 50 percent of the planned sales. In the Northwest, the Forest Service is already planning to log, or rather "salvage," nearly 1-bbf from the east side of the Cascades.

Opt The Clinton

by V



Nor does Option 9 remedy the Forest Service practice of rewarding arson by opening torched lands to logging. Such fires have become commonplace as job and revenue producers in small industry-poor communities. As reported in the last issue of the *Forest Voice*, there were over 1,100 wildland arson fires in California alone last year.

In sum, the proposed 1.2 to 2-billion-board-foot cut levels are merely a base line to which will be added unlimited salvage logging. Since the Forest Service has historically supported industry's interests over the public's interests, it will find no shortage of real or imagined salvage opportunities. On the east side of the Cascades the Forest Service already seeks to "save the forests" by cutting them down.

We have seen a Forest Service memo that tells timber sales planners that even if one board from a timber sale could be called salvage, the entire sale should be called savage because "it's a political thing." Perfectly healthy trees are routinely mowed down because they might become infected at some future date.

on 9 n Solution:

Rozek



photo courtesy of Cascade Holistic Economic Consultants

National Wildlife Federation commented: "loggers [have] stretched those definitions to such a degree in the past that there [has been] little practical difference in logging in the protected and unprotected areas."

From past experience we know that access equates to destruction. The Forest Service and timber industry never err on the side of caution. "Mistakes" are routinely made that result in increased, and often illegal, logging. Environmentalists ask: What is the point of having a reserve if the government is planning to log it?

Fish and Fowl

To protect riparian zones and threatened salmon stocks, the Clinton proposal establishes buffers of 300-feet for fish-bearing streams and 150-feet for non-fish-bearing and intermittent streams. But even these are not sacrosanct. "Light-touch" logging will be allowed; an oxymoronic notion to be sure. Outside of the reserves, stream protection is less than the scientists recommended. Additionally, under this plan the viability rating for most endangered species is only

"medium-high". That means there is a 15-40 percent chance of extinction, which strains conformity to environmental laws.

It is by no means certain that Option 9 adequately complies with the provisions of the Endangered Species Act, the National Forest Management Act, and the National Environmental Policy Act to lift the current injunction which forbids Northwest timber sales. The Administration will present its plan to Federal Judge William Dwyer by July 16. If Dwyer finds that the plan does not comply with the law, the injunction would remain in effect. In that case, the Administration would have to add "sufficiency" language to the proposal and have it approved by Congress. Sufficiency simply states that whatever the new provisions, they are adequate to meet the requirements of existing laws. As such, "sufficiency" acts to deny citizens the right of appeal and dodges judicial review. Environmentalists oppose it on those grounds.

Exports Excluded

Perhaps the single greatest driving force behind the exploitation of public forests is the insatiable

export market. Fifty percent of everything, both public and private, that is cut in six western states is exported. The President dealt timidly with the issue. He announced his intention to rescind the \$100 million export subsidy and signed into law a measure reimposing a ban on the export of raw logs off state and other public lands in the West.

The elimination of the export subsidy is long overdue, but is likely to have scant effect on a multi-billion dollar industry that can get up to three times as much for logs on the export market. The export ban on "raw" logs is laudable but virtually meaningless. A few cuts of the saw magically turn a raw log into an exportable minimally-processed log. These measures will not stop the hemorrhage of American jobs and resources flowing overseas.

Missing Forests

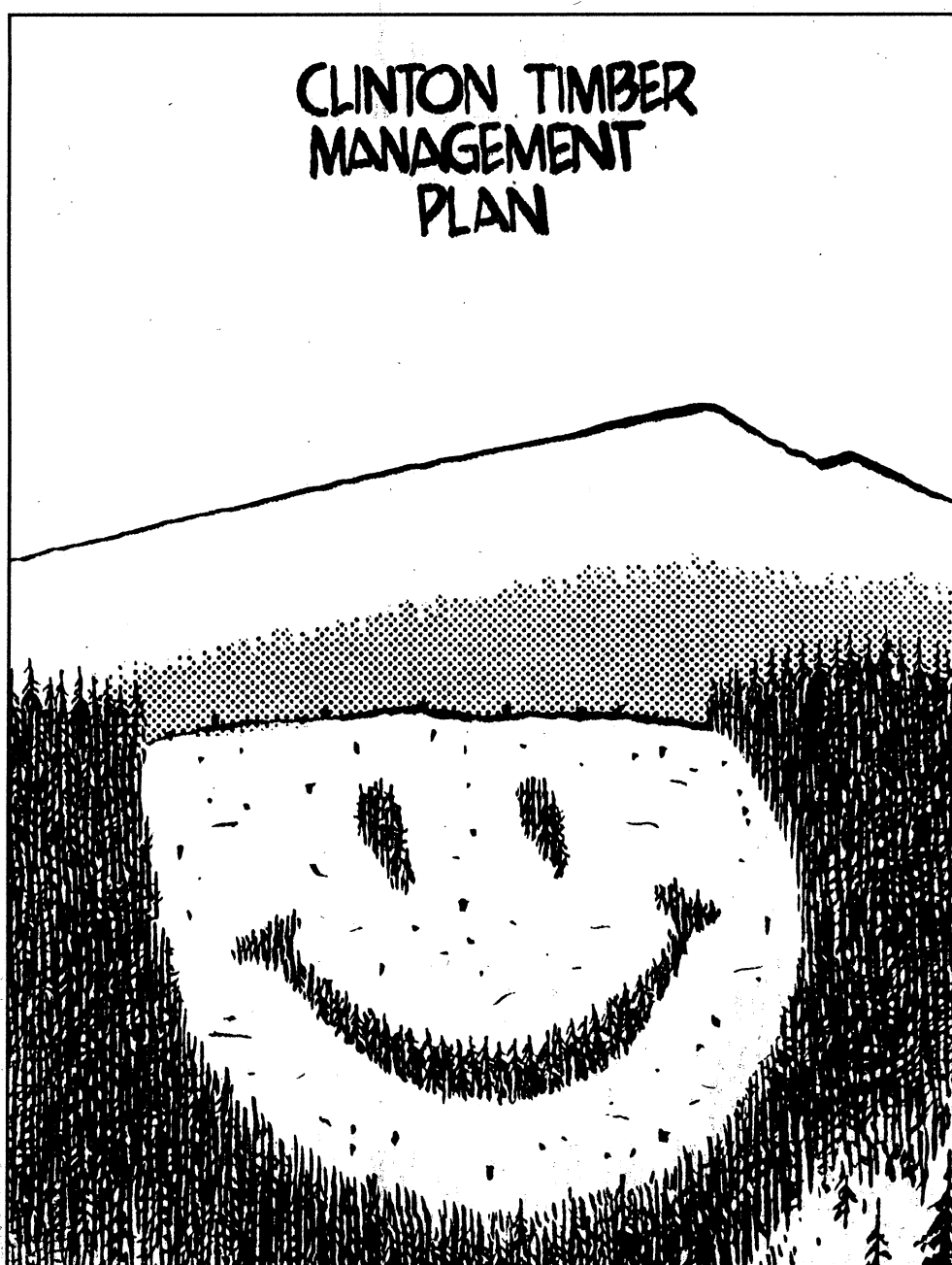
Between the Forest Summit and the Clinton announcement, a curious shrinkage occurred in the national forests of the Northwest. The Forest Service admitted that it had made a slight error in estimating the

Logging Reserves

Under Option 9 reserves would be established that focus on key watersheds rather than individual endangered species, and would comprise 78 percent of the 8.5 million-acre land base. On the surface, again, a proposal with merit. But the "reserves" are not off-limits to logging! They are neither permanent nor restricted. Representative Mike Kopetski of Oregon remarked: "Not one stick of old-growth is protected under this plan."

The plan allows "new logging techniques across the landscape" whose practical effect is to allow logging over an even wider area. Current roadless areas would be opened. Vast tracts of land, up to 500,000 acres, would be released to "intensive ecological experimentation." (*Can that mean anything but more logging?*)

The New York Times reports that under Option 9 companies could remove timber from protected areas if they are considered to be salvaging trees that are *no longer growing*, or thinning overgrowth. A representative from the



Continued on page 16

Timber Crooks

\$100 Million is just the tip of the iceberg as industry swindles taxpayers while the Forest Service looks on

by Alan Pittman

Exploiting its cozy relationship with the Forest Service, the timber industry is stealing logs worth millions of dollars from public forests. With awareness of the pervasive scale of the traditional theft growing, federal prosecutors have begun a campaign against forest fraud.

Timber companies stole between \$36 million-\$100 million worth of timber...in the North Santiam area alone.

But whether the Clinton Administration has the stomach to root out corruption from an entrenched Forest Service and timber industry backed by powerful political interests remains to be seen. Justice Department media handlers, for example, recently ordered Jeff Kent, a leading timber theft prosecutor for the Department in Eugene, OR, to stop publicly

criticizing the Forest Service for its complicity in the theft problem, Kent said.

A 25-member Timber Theft Task Force formed last year to confront the theft problem reports over \$8 million in settlements against timber companies since 1990, according to Task Force leader Hank Kashdan.

In the largest single case to date, Kent and the U.S. Attorney's office in Eugene reached a \$1.7 million settlement in April against Bugaboo Timber Co. and its affiliates Northwest Wood Products Inc. and Young and Morgan Inc. for timber theft in the North Santiam River Canyon east of Salem, OR. In a widening, five-year investigation, federal prosecutors have alleged that timber companies stole between \$36 million-\$100 million worth of timber over several decades in the North Santiam area alone. Thomas Creek Lumber Co. and several other defendants will go on trial October 12 in Eugene for their part in the scam.

"Probably the cases that are being brought are just the tip of the

iceberg," said Mark Hubbard of the Oregon Natural Resources Council (ONRC).

With high prices increasing the demand for timber at the same time that court injunctions have limited supply, timber theft may be on the increase. "The fact that you have a limited resource makes it that much more attractive to get it any way you can," Kashdan said.

And the public outcry over the theft is also on the rise. When a logger cheats the Forest Service, counties lose 25 percent share of the timber sale. For financially strapped counties in the Northwest

"Where does theft or fraud end and become a subsidy?"

that receive tens-of-millions in timber receipts each year, that's big money.

"After 40 years of doing this, they've got it down," said Roy Keene of the Public Forestry

Foundation (and consulting forester to the Native Forest Council -Ed.), explaining the many, varied and often easy ways to steal logs from the government.

One of the most popular includes bribing independent timber accountants called "scalers" and sneaking logs out or paying only a small amount off their true value to the government. (*The Forest Service allows the timber industry to hire its own scalers to measure the amount of wood taken from national forests! -Ed.*) For timber sold as a lump sum for all the trees within a given boundary, unscrupulous loggers often simply cut outside the unsupervised border. The variety of other scams on the government range from cutting valuable tree types at the price of cheaper trees, to scheming to cahoots on competitive oral bids, according to Keene.

Where is the Forest Service while all this is going on?

"The agency doesn't consider itself as a protector of the forest or as a regulator of industry but rather as a partner with industry at the expense of the public treasury," Andy Kerr of ONRC said.

"I have a hard time knowing what they (agency critics) are talking about," said Jerry Hofer, who administers timber sales in the

Forest Service Chief F. Dale Robertson testifies before Congress

- Asked by Congressman Yates of Illinois who measured (scaled) the volume of timber cut from public lands, the Chief answered: "The buyer."
- Reminded by Yates that the Forest Service has been promising for 20 years to convert from scaling to measurement and that 85 percent of the timber theft results from scaling, the Chief answered that "existing contracts could not be converted, and that the Forest Service did not have sufficient trained employees."
- Yates wanted to know why the Forest Service did not ask for stiffer penalties for timber theft? Chief Robertson questioned whether we wanted to deal more harshly with timber theft than defense contractor corruption.

Robertson: Painful to listen to



photo by Elizabeth Feryl

- Asked by Congressman Skaggs from Colorado for objective criteria for determining the cost of money-losing timber sales, the Chief said he did not want written guidelines and preferred to just give directions to his employees.
- Asked by Congressman Yates why the Forest Service can't obey environmental laws. Robertson answered: "I'm trying to obey the laws, the judge just disagrees with us."

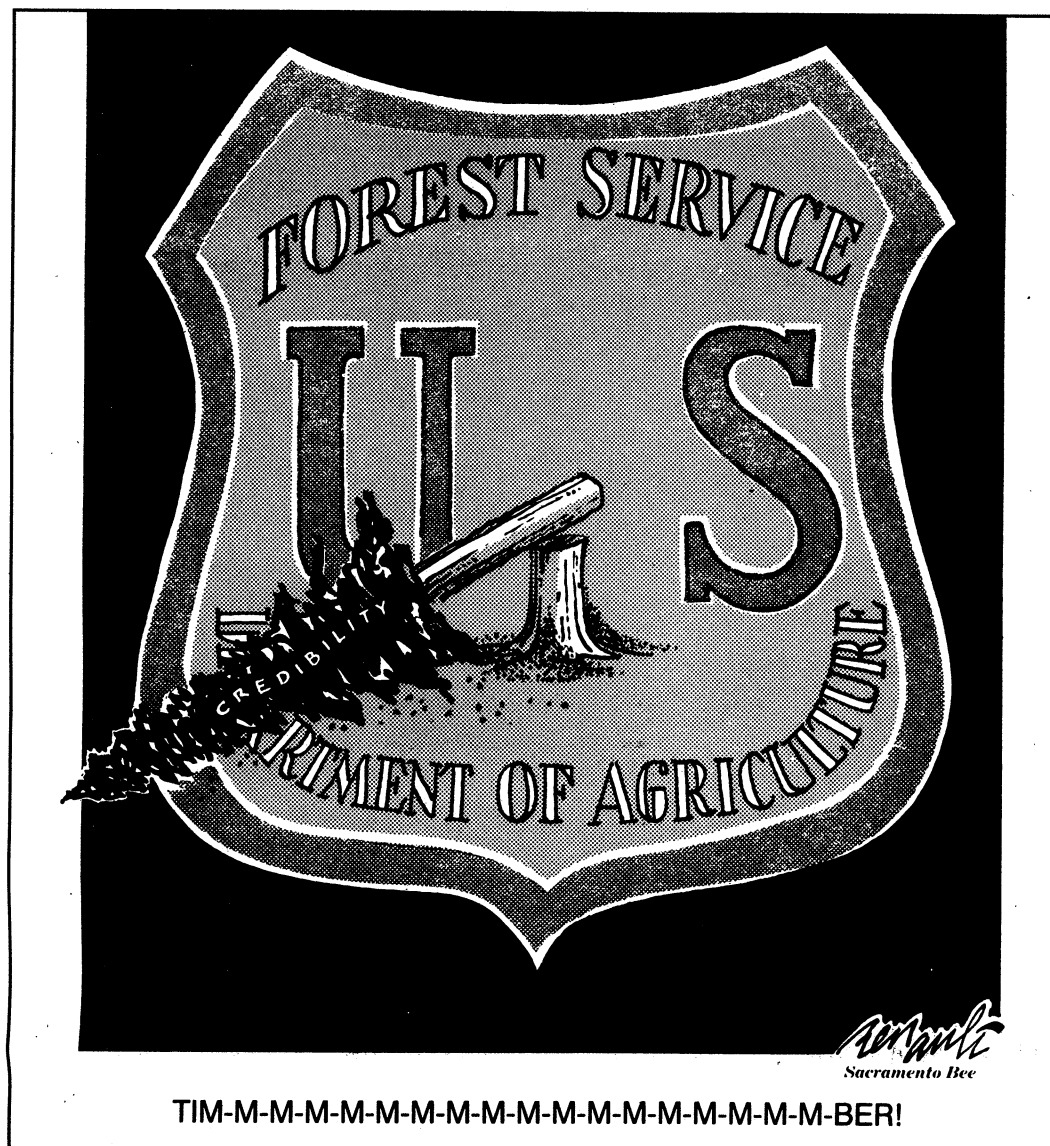
Testimony compiled by Gwen Marshall from the U.S. House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee Hearing on April 27, 1993

Workers within the Forest Service that try to stop the taxpayer rip-off are often punished...

Forest Service's Northwest Region. Hofer echoes the timber industry that dismisses the theft problem as just a few isolated incidents. But, perhaps tellingly, the agency itself has compiled no statistics that would indicate the size of the theft.

And less complacent workers within the Forest Service that try to stop the taxpayer rip-off are often punished, said Jeff DeBonis of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER). Over three dozen agency employees have contacted PEER with stories of agency fraud and inaction in dealing with timber theft, he said. Unfortunately, many of these workers fear to go public, DeBonis

Good News: As of this printing, Washington sources indicate that F. Dale Robertson will be replaced as Chief of the Forest Service. The rumored replacement is Jack Ward Thomas, Chief Research Wildlife Biologist and Team Leader of the Forest Ecosystem Management Assessment Team that developed the ten options presented to the President.



Taxpayers Deserve Better

Congressman Yates to Forest Service Chief F. Dale Robertson on obeying the law:

"Why don't you reduce or remove the timber targets?"

Chief Robertson:

"I wouldn't get much timber coming in."

Congressman Dicks responding to the \$100 million scaling theft from national forests asked:

"Why doesn't the Forest Service change to the tree measurement system?"

Chief Robertson:

"Industry in the Northwest objected to the measurement system."

said. "These agents basically work for the people they're investigating."

Tim Hermach of the Native Forest Council is not surprised that an agency that broke environmental laws would also turn its back of

...the public must demand deep institutional change in a Forest Service too cozy with the industry it regulates.

theft from taxpayers. "The Forest Service culture is an outlaw, lawless agency from the top down."

And critics are also not surprised that an agency that sells timber at far below its true value or cost to the government would also allow companies to steal it outright.

"Where does theft or fraud end and become a subsidy?" Keene asks.

Unfortunately, all this corruption is news as old as the Forest Service itself. "What's news is that the government is starting to actively

pursue and prosecute these crimes," Hubbard said.

The Clinton Administration has talked strong on ending the exploitation of public lands. But "Clinton's new Justice Department is now accused of doing the same thing as Reagan-Bush," said DeBonis of PEER.

Proposed solutions to the theft problem include stricter enforcement and having the agency directly measure, or even cut, its own logs. "Any way you look at it, there's still the risk that we would be ripped off," said Kent, who previously has said that the

The agency remains geared and funded toward getting out the cut...

public must demand deep institutional change in a Forest Service too cozy with the industry it regulates.

But such change will not come easily. Congressional investigators have written reams of testimony on timber theft since the 1970s. Most

recently, a May 4 report criticized Forest Service managers for interfering with their own timber

The Oregon Forest Industries' Political Action Committee spent \$118,000 on campaign contributions...

theft investigators. But the report has apparently had little real impact, and past attempts to reform the Forest Service from the timber industry's influence have failed. The agency remains geared and funded toward getting out the cut for industry rather than the conscientious management of the public forest.

Powerful western timber legislators such as Sen. Mark O. Hatfield, R-OR, have protected their campaign contributors well. To preserve the current system, the Oregon Forest Industries Political Action Committee, for example, spent \$118,000 on campaign contributions and lobbying in the 1990 general election, according to state records.

"This timber theft issue is right on the verge of just mushrooming," said DeBonis, who believes public outrage over the issue may tip the political balance in favor of reform.

But for now, sawdust and greed and money and politics--they all mix together in the Northwest.

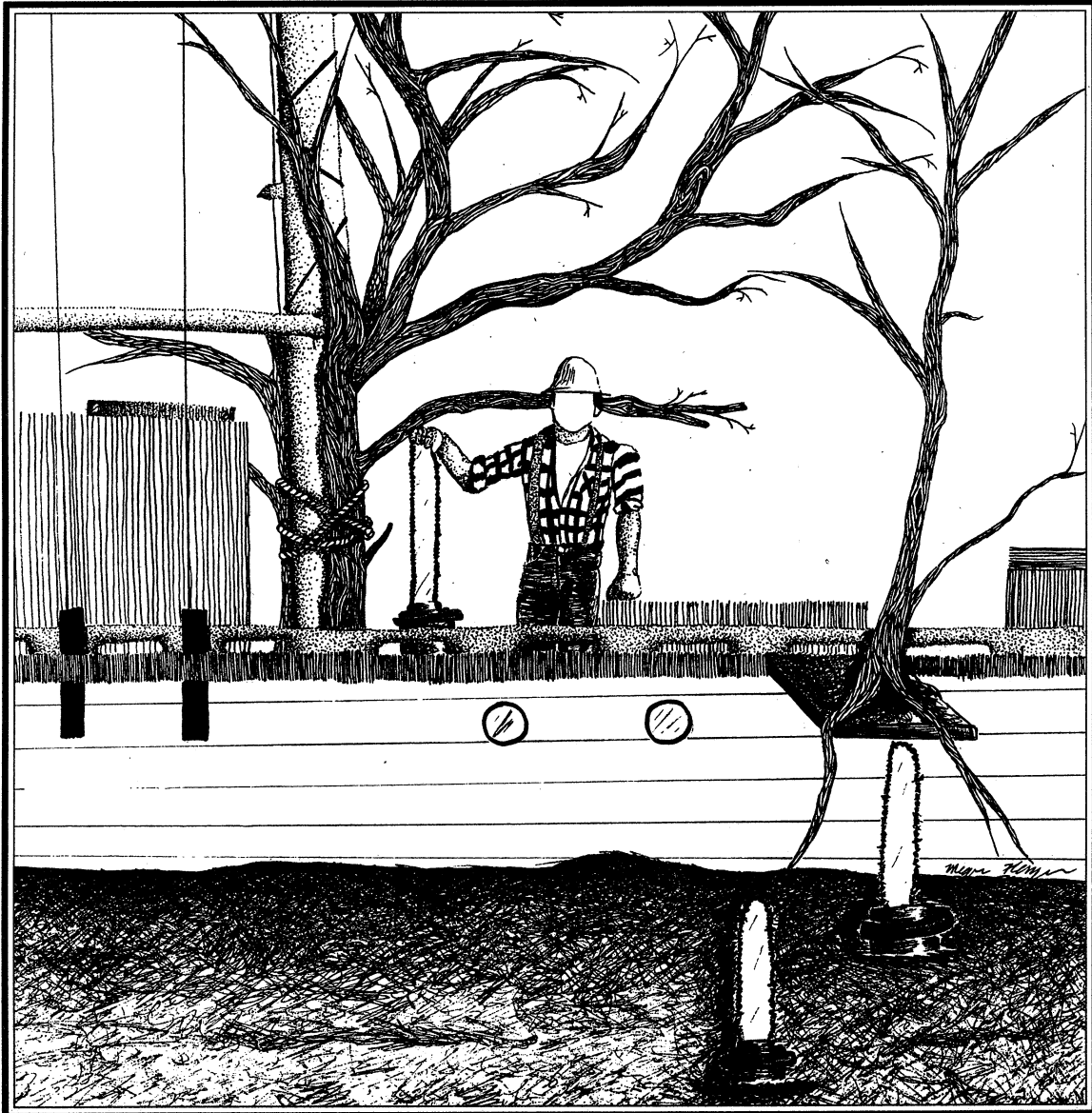
This article was edited and reprinted from the June 3, 1993 issue of What's Happening

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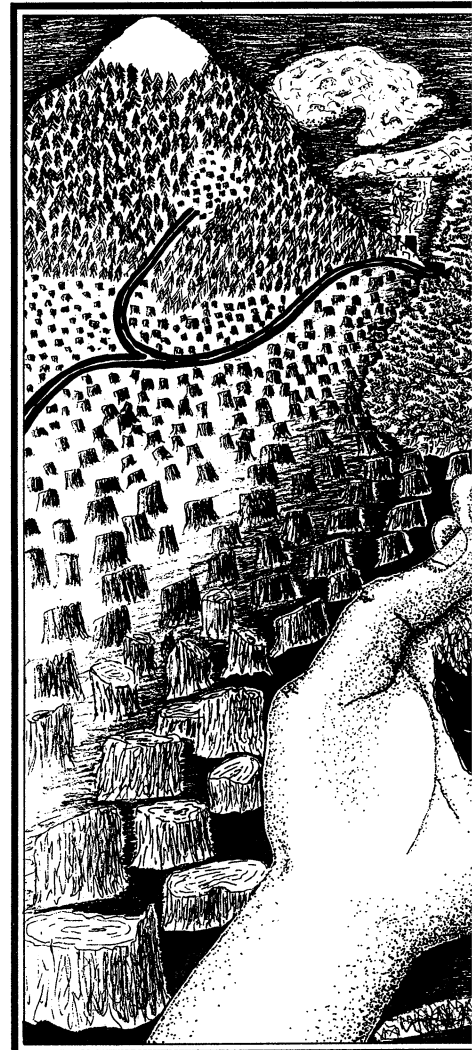
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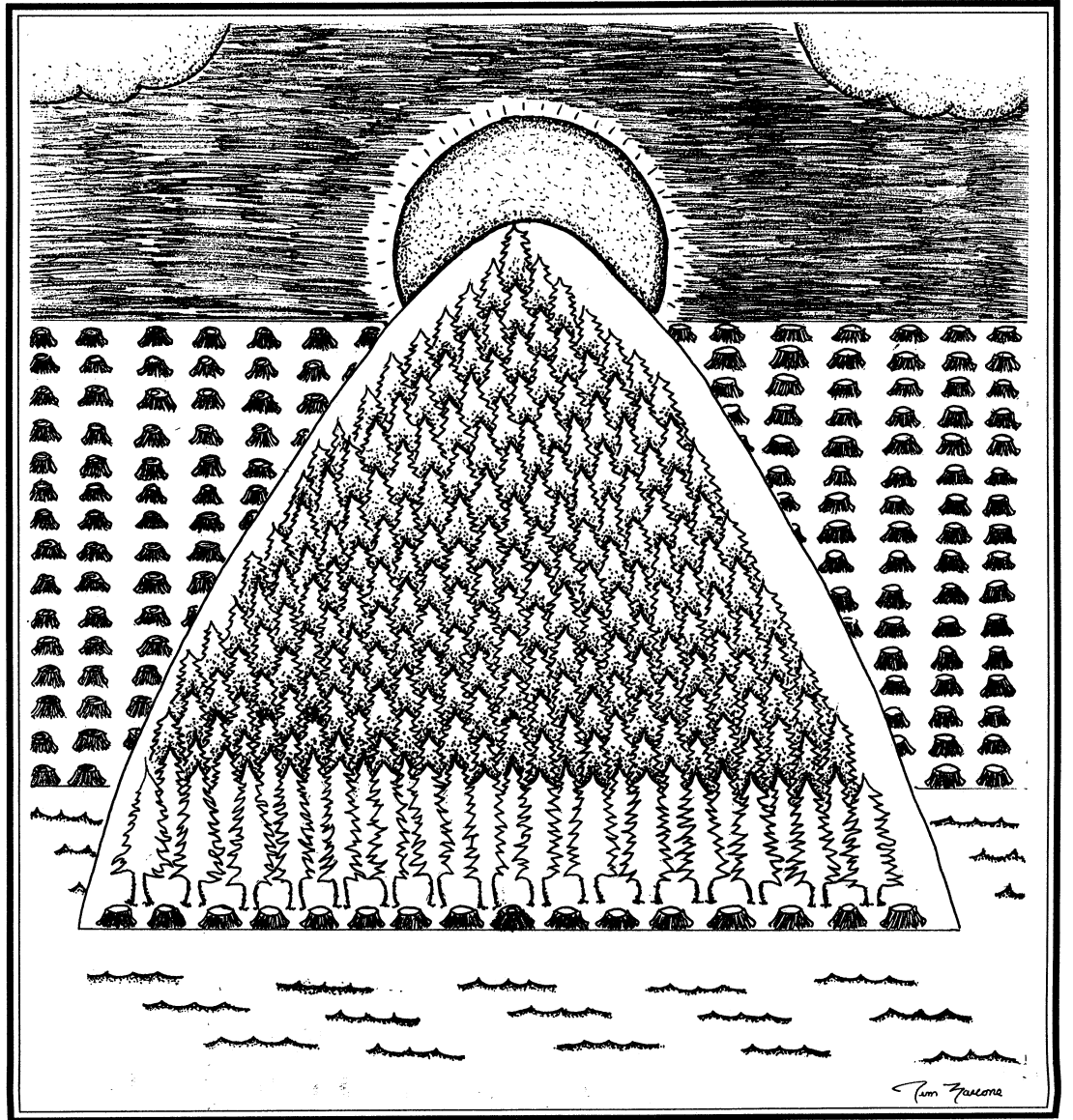


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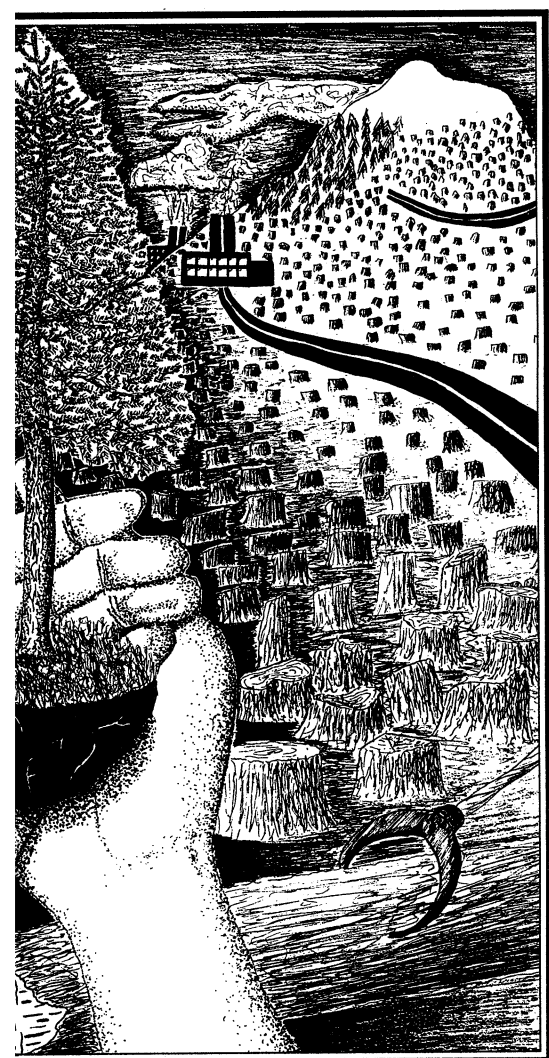
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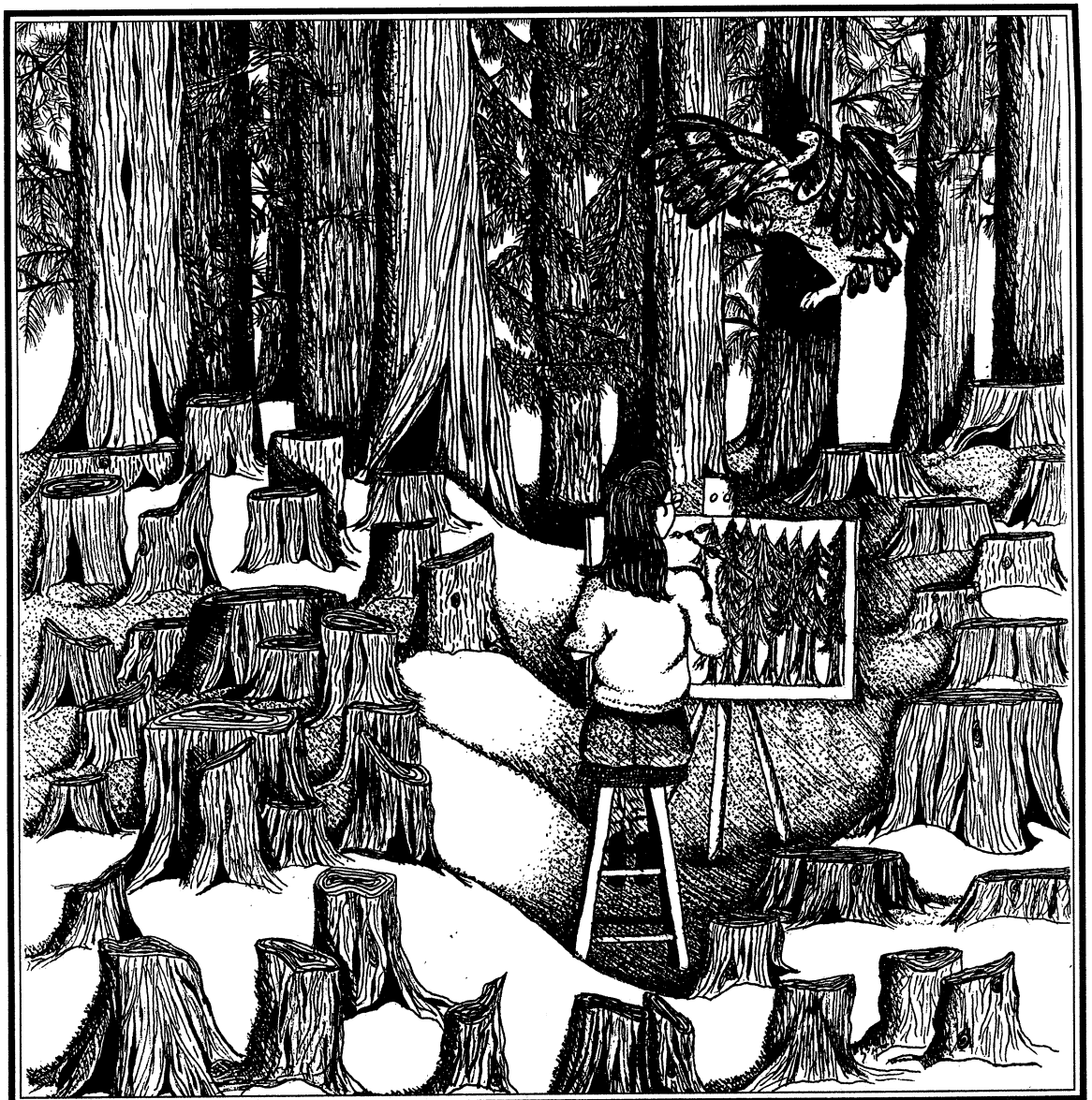
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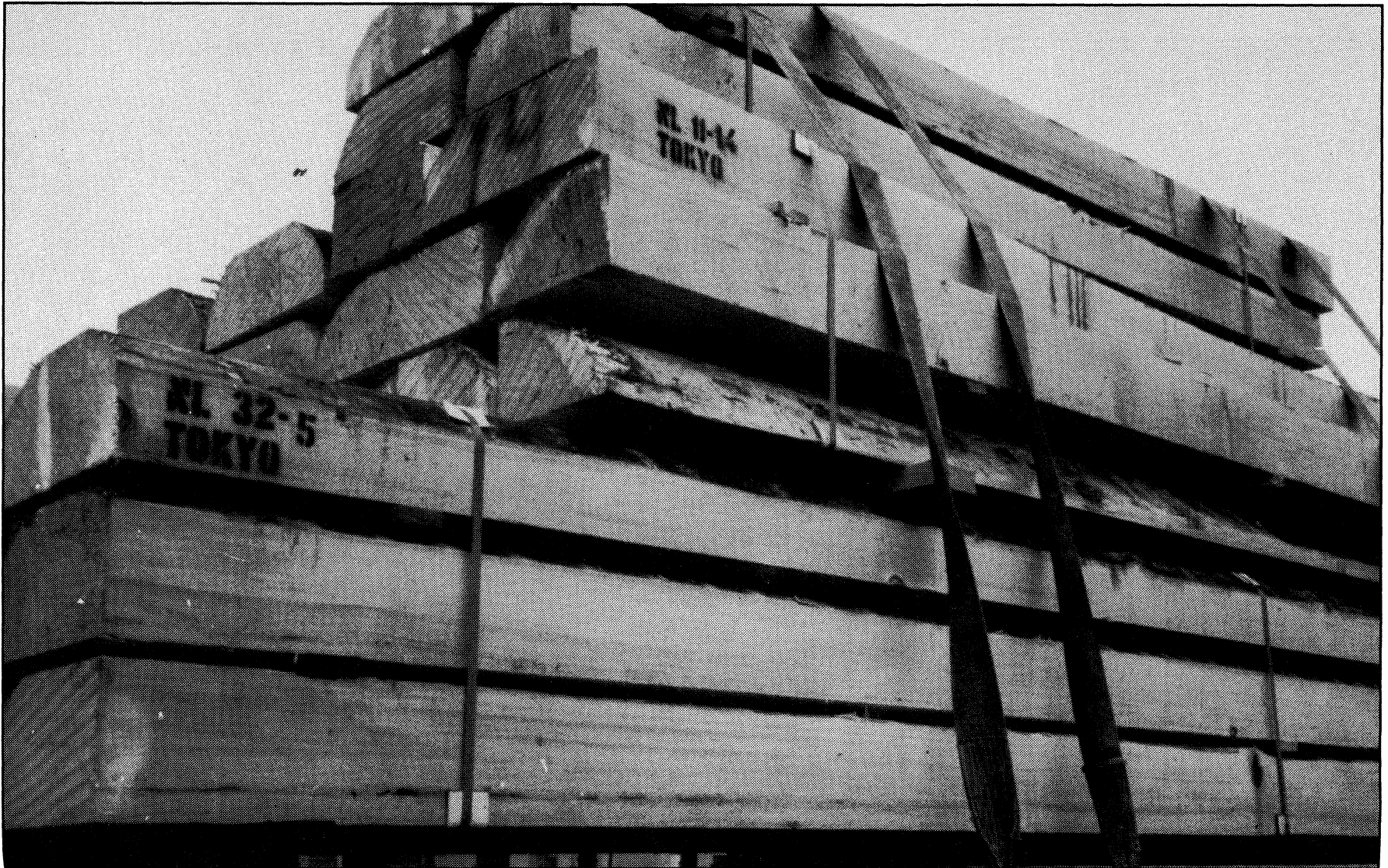


Jessica Moriarty

Free Trade: NOT!

Resource Colonialism:

The Takeover of the North American Timber Industry by Japan



Federal timber on its way to Japan

photo by Tim Hermach

Laws “banning” raw log exports from public lands are virtually meaningless since a few cuts of the saw turns raw logs into exportable minimally-processed logs.

by Michael Donnelly

Free trade is a lot like motherhood: hard to vote against, but very costly if not restrained. How costly? Weyerhaeuser reports that it gets three jobs (down from 4.5 in 1980 due to automation) out of cutting and hauling the raw-material equivalent of one million board feet of timber to the export dock. But the Japanese report that they get 80 value-added jobs from the same million board feet producing finished goods.

Parenthetically, this stunning illumination sheds some light on the rightful target of the timber industry's misplaced ire. While industry is quick to blame environmentalists and, preposterously, an undersized owl for mill closures, job losses, and despondent workers; the deserving winner of their discontent is, well, themselves.

According to figures from the United States Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station and the U.S. Department of Commerce, nearly half of all the trees cut in six western timber states (AK, WA, OR, MT, ID, CA) in the last ten years were exported unfinished. One in four trees was exported as a round log; another went out as chips, pulp, or veneer. Further, to side-step the ban on federal raw-log exports, industry exported slabbed-logs called cants or merches. Ninety percent of this export volume ended up in Japan, primarily in the mills of Osaka.

As the Clinton Administration crafts a solution to the Northwest forest crisis, and conservationists struggle to define the issue in ecological terms while timber workers speak out for consideration of the “human equation”, it is helpful to remember that beyond the flurry of green and brown

sound-bites, raw economics drives the issue.

A Historical View

In North America, the wood products industry model has been one of giant timber-based conglomerates, which include timber, pulp and paper, sawnwood and plywood industries. The Weyerhaeuser Company and Georgia-Pacific Corporation are typical examples of this type of conglomerate. These giants, through a series of late 19th century subsidies like the Railroad Land Grants of 1866 (3.7 million acres) and the Timber and Stone Act of 1878 (10 million acres), have gained possession of abundant forest resources at public expense.

These vast holdings, along with automation, have allowed them to remain competitive in the interna-

tional market. Having such huge tracts of timber enabled these conglomerates to cut at levels in excess of domestic consumption and they have shifted more of their activities exclusively to the export market. Ironically, at the April 2nd Clinton Forest Summit in Portland, after hearing tale upon woeful tale of how protection of public ecosystems was creating hardship for timber workers, Charles Bingham, vice-president of Weyerhaeuser, proudly proclaimed that the 28 percent of his company's production that is exported as raw logs was “about the right mix.”

Who Profits?

The country that profits most from the United States' irrational log export policy is Japan, which today ranks as the world's second largest producer and consumer of pulp and paper, led only by the U.S. Unwilling to cut its own timber

resource, Japan has aggressively become the world leader in wood imports, accounting for 80 percent of world trade, with North America supplying the majority of the volume. Japan imports annually over 5 million tons of wood chips from North America alone. One company, Ishiman Corporation, holds a monopoly on all West coast exports to Japan.

Under a series of notorious 1950's agreements with the U.S. Forest Service, a consortium of Japanese firms, including Daishowa Paper Manufacturing, was given exclusive 50-year rights to cut trees for pulp on large tracts of Alaska's Tongass National Forest. Publicly-owned, 600-year-old trees are being liquidated for the ludicrous price of \$2 each.

Daishowa also has exclusive contracts in British Columbia and has sited a pulp mill there despite fierce opposition from the Lubicon Lake Indian Nation. As a result, Daishowa is subject to an ongoing consumer boycott in Canada. Another Japanese firm, Honshu Paper, has opened a mill (ALPAC) in Alberta.

In Alaska, Daishowa and a Mill City, Oregon firm, Young and Morgan Timber, have begun a joint venture to cut federal and Native Alaskan-owned timber for export with an eventual siting of a mill near Kenai, AK. In Washington state, Daishowa has opened a new state-of-the-art highly automated sawmill on the Olympic Peninsula

near Port Angeles while nearby domestic mills have closed due to lack of raw material supply. In Oregon, Young and Morgan recently sold large amounts of top-grade cants (slabbed logs) cut from publicly-owned old-growth to Japanese purchasers for the incredible sum of \$3,000 per thousand board feet, over twice the historical price. The rabidly anti-union Young and Morgan purchased the same timber from the U.S. Forest Service paying the U.S. Treasury less than \$500 dollars per thousand board foot.

In 1975, Young and Morgan pleaded guilty to bid-rigging on federal timber sales in a case that cost the taxpayers over \$27 million. They received a \$25,000 fine. Recently, in April of 1993, Young and Morgan settled out of court for \$1.7 million for their involvement in a scaling fraud scheme that U.S. attorneys claim cost the taxpayers about \$36 million.

Beyond staggering losses of natural resources and taxpayer dollars, this adds up to a takeover of the North American timber industry by Japanese interests not unlike that which occurred in television and other electronics manufacturing and which is occurring in the high tech and automobile industries.

This takeover is being abetted by politicians spouting the tired rhetoric of "Free Trade" when the entire world knows by now that

Japan clearly does not practice anything close to free trade. The practice of a monopoly controlling the entire export trade would violate U.S. antitrust laws, and Japanese markets are closed to a host of U.S. products such as rice and beef, to name but two.

Japan's takeover of timber is matched by efforts in other resource areas, as well. Over half of the grazing permits for cattle on public lands in the West are owned by foreign corporations, primarily Japanese, Dutch and British. While American-owned beef producers are shut out of Japan's markets, Japanese firms buy U.S. ranches, graze cows on public lands at taxpayer-subsidized prices, and then package the beef here in plants like Kyotaru's Salem, Oregon plant for sale to restaurants in Japan at \$22 a kilo. (Kyotaru also benefits from the over-harvesting of immature Pacific whiting, a fish which is packaged for export as imitation crab [Kibun] at the same Salem facility.)

How Do They Do It?

Japan maintains a \$1 billion per year lobbying effort in the United States and employs a number of well-connected Americans to advance its agenda, such a former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and former Oregon Governor, Vic Atiyeh. Over one-half of the Reagan/Bush-era U.S. Trade Representatives who once worked for U.S. national interests in negotiations on timber trade,

now work as lobbyists for the Japanese. Until this practice is exposed and stopped, Americans will continue to be sidetracked into battles over fragments of the once-vast ecosystem. And America will continue to be transformed into a resource colony.

As in the case of domestic oil, gold, silver, and certain high tech products, the President must declare timber a "strategic resource" and ban further exporting of unfinished wood products. The elimination of the \$150 million Foreign Sales Corporation tax incentive to export should, and will, probably occur. Yet, like the phony, easily side-stepped public-log export ban, it would be little more than a hollow gesture since the amount is but a rounding error given the huge volume of exports. A flat-out ban must be imposed.

There is no such thing as "Free Trade." Until that dinosaur theory is buried and an effort to establish Fair Trade (one of ours for one of yours) is imposed on our trading partners, America will continue to lose ecosystems and jobs, and its status as a first-rate economic power.

Michael Donnelly, former lumber millworker, currently serves as President of Friends of the Breitenbush Cascades, a small, Salem, OR-based conservation group that is affiliated with the Native Forest Council and the Oregon Natural Resources Council.



Kathy Carl

20 years ago the Forest Service announced its Environmental Program for the Future. Those who don't learn from history are doomed to repeat it.

Then and Now

by Michael Frome

Montana, 1974

My old friends of the Forest Service, the boys who brought back DDT, have devised a new approach to involve the public in the process of decision-making. Certainly something new and different is needed. Public forests have been run for the private benefit of timber and livestock industries long enough. The fishermen and hunter and other outdoor sportsmen come in last. So do the fish and wildlife and forest environment, despite a basic mandate from Congress directing the Forest Service to consider all aspects of multiple use. It is a mandate generously ignored.

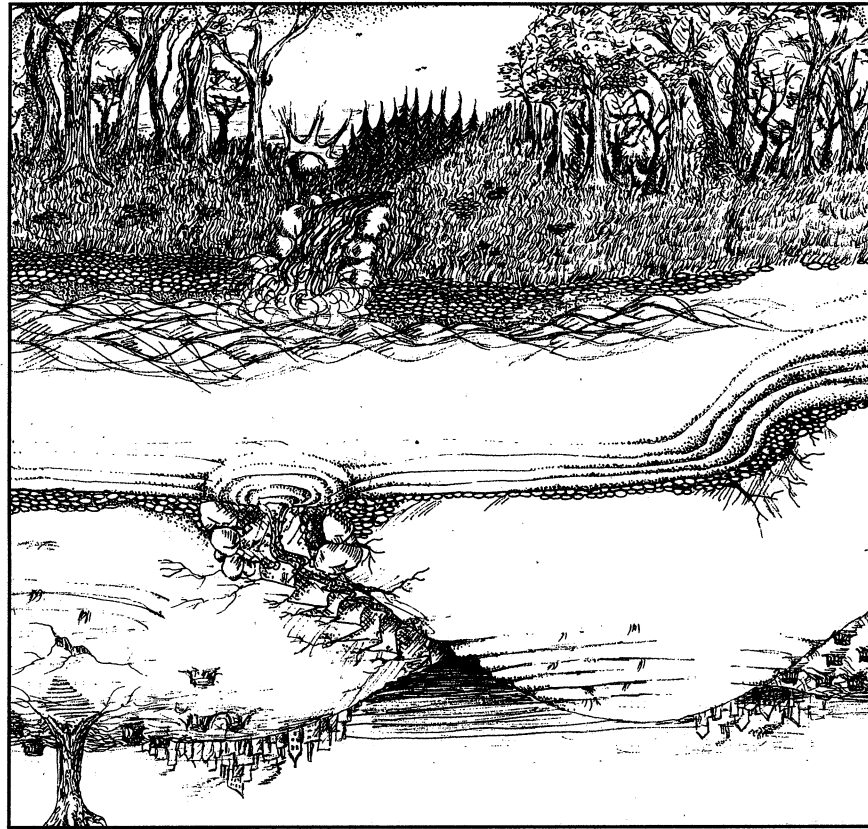
On the face of it, the new thrust sounds for once like a determined effort to deal the little people in on the action. We have been offered the draft of something called the "Environment Program for the Future," and been told it reflects the spirit of the National Environmental Policy Act. We have been

Public forests have been run for the private benefit of timber and livestock industries long enough.

invited to furnish input, to indicate a choice of several alternatives, to really influence the development of a broad, long term forestry plan for the nation.

That's how it sounds. When you live intimately with these issues, however, as I have over the years, you learn from bitter disappointment the difference between propaganda and performance. While eternally hoping for change, you learn to read the fine print and to keep your guard up.

Through one form of public involvement exercise after another, grassroots conservationists have been trained to keep their guard up in dealing with the Forest Service. In past years there were the "show-me trips" and the "listening sessions." The "listening" alas, was accompanied by a stream



Jennifer Collier

of color brochures and other promotions extolling clearcutting, a thoroughly "efficient and economic system" of placing timber production above all other values. Cutting soared, tripling in volume over a period of twenty years; the resource, in turn, suffered and wildlife habitat deteriorated.

"Public comments are invited but the consultant atmosphere appears to be lacking," complained Senator Jennings Randolph, of West Virginia, in early 1972, after an investigation at the behest of his constituents. "The prevailing feeling expressed by those after attending the hearings is that decisions have already been made and their expressed concerns have only been accepted as an empty polite gesture."

In the same year, Charles Prigmore, president of the Alabama Conservancy, charged much the same: "The Forest Service

...you learn from bitter disappointment the difference between propaganda and performance.

indeed holds hearings at infrequent intervals, particularly when public pressure becomes irresistible. But this is an attitude of patient tolerance of public concern and think-

ing, rather than any real encouragement of joint decision-making. Forest Service personnel consider

Cutting soared, tripling in volume over a period of twenty years...

themselves to be the experts, and the public to be ignorant at best and obstructionist at worst."

Then there was the editorial in the September, 1973 issue of Montana Outdoors, published by Montana's Fish and Game Department. The headline told the story: "Yes, We Believe in Public Involvement, But We Gotta Cut Those Trees." The editorial dealt with the four public involvement meetings at which 90 percent of those present opposed the Cedar-Bassett Creek timber sale, in an area highly coveted by sportsmen. Despite written objections of the State Fish and Game Department and the public, the Forest Service decided to log anyway.

I could cite scores of such cases, current as well as past, throughout the National Forest System. Montana, the outdoorsman's paradise, seems a prime target; it will never be the same when the foresters are through with it.

Are we now, however, facing the dawn of a bright new day through

the Environmental Program for the Future? The plan, according to the prospectus, "will enable the public to become more systematically informed on important issues facing the managers of the National Forest System and the other programs of the Forest Service, and to participate in those issues along with the Congress and specific forest users." Who could ask for anything more promising?

The document, I fear, does not fulfill the promise. The emphasis in the text is not on sustaining land health over the long run, but on gaining maximum production of commodities over the short run, without fundamental concern for the future. Three levels of operation are offered to the public: low, moderate, and high. However, the low level of timber cutting, 16.4 billion board feet, is just a shade below the moderate level and not much below the high (of 20 billion board feet). There is no choice of indicating that today's cutting level is already too high, that foresters should revert to a sensible dimension in order to insure perpetual yield.

In his statement presenting the Environmental Program before a briefing conference which I attended, John R. McGuire, Chief

"Yes, We Believe in Public Involvement, But We Gotta Cut Those Trees."

of the Forest Service, declared: "We have tried to tie every action to its effects on every related action or use of the forest resource. For example, we spell out that meeting demands for more recreation opportunities--wilderness, recreation areas, and campgrounds--will necessarily mean less area devoted to timber growing for houses and other products."

Such is the tenor throughout: you must choose between two conflicting objectives: (1) assuring appro-

appropriate esthetic and amenity values of the forest environment, and (2) assuring adequate flows of goods and services at reasonable prices. By implication, the trout fishermen who desire clean cold water in a setting of solitude are depriving the urban and rural poor of adequate low cost housing. The objective of land health, completely compatible with that fisherman's search for "amenities," is ignored. So too are the impacts of timber export, shortened rotations producing pulp instead of housing materials, and the damage caused by clearcutting and conversion to monoculture.

Page after page of the draft program yield misleading data. Three examples follow:

"The controversy over clearcutting stems primarily from its visual impact; a newly clearcut area looks bad. No other system of producing

But clearcutting actually is applied to virtually all species, not for silvicultural but rather for economic reasons.

a forest leaves such a conspicuous mark on the landscape." Visual impact is the very least of the controversy, as compared with the impact on wildlife habitat, soil stability, soil nutrients, and water quality; whether this system produces or destroys a forest is a moot open question in itself--the answer cannot be assumed on the forester's say-so.

"The technique (clearcutting) is used primarily for those species that cannot tolerate shade, are subject to windthrow, or for other reasons grow best in even-aged stands." But clearcutting actually is applied to virtually all species, not for silvicultural but rather for economic reasons.

"The Environmental Program for the Future statement is aimed at the broadest possible review of the

What they really want to generate is... public support for increased appropriations to cut more trees...

environmental, economic, and social effects of Forest Service programs, but it in no way obviates the need for specific environmental impact studies and statements prior to all major actions proposed. The Forest Service is also firmly committed to comply with all federal air and water quality standards as part of all programs." This sounds too good to be true; but as Dale Burk, one of the

country's ablest writers on the outdoors environment, reports in the Daily Missoulian, published in western Montana, it simply doesn't work this way in practice.

Dale was born into a logging family and knows trees from timber. He has won assorted prizes for his courage and perception,

Forests should never be conceived simply as factories for pulp and timber.

particularly for coverage of the eco-disaster on the Bitterroot National Forest. His most recent series focuses on the projected Moose Creek timber sale, on the headwaters of the East Fork of the Bitterroot River. According to a recent article by Dale, three local citizen organizations, backed by four national organizations, have protested the sale. They charge the sale violates the National Environmental Policy Act, Multiple Use Act, Wilderness Act, and the Forest Service's own directives on roadless area inventory; that the impact statement was filled with factual errors, with insufficient consideration for wildlife and watershed values. We also learn from this account that the Environmental Protection Agency believes the Forest Service made its deci-

Environmental Program is treated as merely another "output." Under the "low supply alternative," habitat would be improved on national forests and national grasslands through coordination with other management activities on 15.8 million acres--out of a total of 187 million acres; endangered species would be protected through special practices on 110,000 acres; fish and wildlife habitat would be improved on 900,000 acres, and wildlife technical assistance would be furnished to private woodland owners on 1.4 million acres. The moderate-to-high alternatives provide little more. There is no implicit recognition that wildlife is a user of all forest lands, nor a stated objective of achieving at long last a semblance of balance between wildlife versus timber cutting and grazing of domestic stock.

Endangered species are especially subject to short shrift. According to the far-reaching Endangered Species Act, which became law on December 28, 1973, all federal agencies are directed to insure that actions authorized, funded or carried out by them do not jeopardize the continued existence of any species or result in the destruction of its habitat. Thus, priority must be assigned throughout the National Forest System, but the Environmental Program offers "special practices" for only a very small portion.



Andrew Randisi

sion to road and log the area with insufficient scientific information.

Little wonder that Dale Burk concludes: "It appears more and more that the agency remains glued to the same old cut, cut, and cut--some-more philosophy that led it into disgrace in the first place."

There is little for sportsmen to cheer about. Wildlife in the

Reading this document carefully convinces me that my friends of the Forest Service have found a new package for the old sales pitch. What they really want to generate is not public involvement in decision making but public support for increased appropriations to cut more trees, build more roads, spread more chemical poisons, graze more livestock. The draft Environmental Program

supposedly represents the basis of furnishing public input, but page after page is filled with the most suggestive comments on why the low level alternatives will not do, and why the high level alternative will best meet "national production goals." Almost as an afterthought, hunters and fishermen are promised greater access, but in many cases there is too much access already for the game and the true sportsman.

Forests should never be conceived simply as factories for pulp and timber. In any long term forestry

Remember, it's your world-- don't leave it to the experts.

plan the capacity of the ecosystem should be the basic concern, rather than self-fulfilling prophecies of unrestrained growth in a wasteful society.

The first step in developing an environmental program should probably be an intensive educational effort within the Forest Service and forestry profession. Improving the environment to many foresters is focused on increasing commodity production.

Other disciplines need to be involved in forest policy and administration. The Fish and Wildlife Service, state fish and game departments, and the Environmental Protection Agency should all play active roles, more active than at present.

Then, at last, there is the public at the grassroots. A series of regional town meetings out where the rubber meets the road should discuss the future of our public and private forests. People don't need to wait for someone else to ring the bell. Get out and see the woodlands, then call in your friends and local media for an open forum. You'll find the way to make your influence felt. Remember, it's your world--don't leave it to the experts.

Michael Frome is one the deans of American environmental writing and is currently Environmental Journalist-in-Residence at the Huxley College of Environmental Studies in Bellingham, WA

This article was written in December, 1974, but never published. We are grateful to Mr. Frome for sharing it with our readers.

Solution:

continued from page 7

available timber. In fact it overestimated the amount of standing forest by as much as 40 percent in some areas. Congressman Peter DeFazio of Oregon was so outraged that he threatened to ask the President to fire Forest Service Chief F. Dale Robertson and his top management team for gross incompetence. *(A request that we enthusiastically concur with. Ironically, Tim Hermach warned DeFazio about excessive Forest Service harvest estimates five years ago. DeFazio did nothing.)* An embarrassed President Clinton, speaking before the editorial board of The Oregonian, said: "Obviously, a lot of people are disappointed because

Service has been quietly ridding itself of Forest Supervisors who have displayed that most dreaded of employee characteristics: an environmental ethic.

In 1989, a group of 13 Forest Supervisors sent a letter to Chief F. Dale Robertson. In it they told the chief that there was "a growing concern that we have become an organization out of control... a dysfunctional Forest Service family."

They said that public values were changing and that current programs that focus on commodity timber production did not reflect land stewardship values embodied in the agency's mission statement. "We are not meeting the quality land management expectations of our public and our employees."

people out and replace them with supervisors who are more aligned with an old, rather than a new, outlook on forest management."

Showing True Colors

Even before the results of the Clinton summit were announced, the

This chain-saw mentality points out what is perhaps the fatal flaw in any plan that falls short of closing the national forests to logging: can the Forest Service be trusted to implement even the best of plans?

Like timber industry champion Senator Bob Packwood who, after 20 years of molesting women,

This chain-saw mentality points out what is perhaps the fatal flaw in any plan that falls short of closing the national forests to logging: can the Forest Service be trusted to implement it?

The Forest Service has been quietly ridding itself of Forest Supervisors who have displayed that most dreaded of employee characteristics: an environmental ethic.

the annual yield is so low. But the truth is that the actual forest available for yield has been revised downward by the Forest Service."

Easing the Pain

To ease the transition of timber-dependent communities, the President proposed to invest \$1.2 billion over five years for "jobs, for retraining, for giving business access to capital for supporting economic development in communities and job-creating investments in ecological restoration." As a measure of how spoiled the industry

The supervisors asked for the Chief's help and guidance, and pledged to work with him to find solutions. They concluded that "it is time that we start dealing with our internal problems, before we crack apart at the seams."

The Chief apparently saw the Forest Supervisors as the problem and preferred shooting the messengers to heeding the message. Of the original 13, only two remain. The others have been reassigned to desk jobs, or forced to retire. Several were hounded by phony investigations that were described by one supervisor as "unrelenting," "vindictive," and "trivial."

"Political cleansing," a Forest Service employees group called it, "a midnight massacre to move good

Forest Service already began to trot out its "new ecosystem management" plans. On the Umpqua and Gifford Pinchot National Forests, the Forest Service proposes to "foster old-growth attributes via sustainable management strategies." But the only thing new about the proposal is the environmental rhetoric.

According to the plan, "initial treatments will include a clearcut harvest and other harvests that remove 20, 40, 60 or 80 percent of the original forest area. These will be compared with an unmanaged area... The trees in the treated areas will range from 70 to over 500-years old."

Why one would have to cut down something that has managed itself perfectly well for 500 years in order to give it "old-growth attributes", is unclear. What is clear is that nothing has changed within the Forest Service. The same get-the-cut-out-at-any-cost mentality still dominates. Scientific recommendations and forest summits notwithstanding, the Forest Service continues concocting schemes to maximize the cut on behalf of the industry it serves.

explained to outraged voters that he "just didn't get it," the Forest Service continues not to get it. Environmentalists fear that any solution to the Northwest crisis that leaves the current Forest Service management in charge of the public's forests, would be as ill-advised as putting Packwood in charge of the secretarial pool.

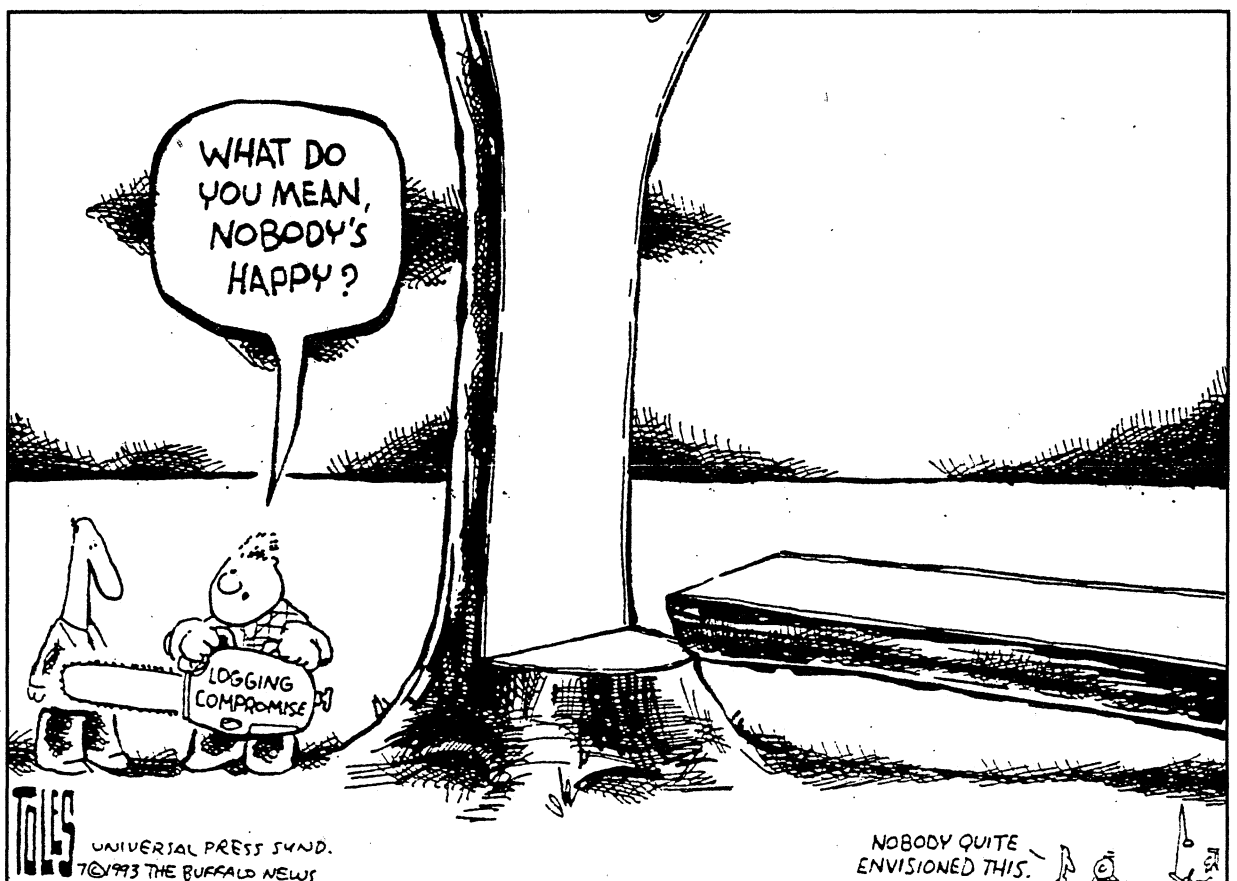
Finally, nowhere in the summit proceedings, or in the proposed solution, is there any acknowledgment of the fact that these forests are *public lands* whose ownership is a shared legacy of the American people. They were originally set aside for preservation, not plunder. It is indeed unfortunate that the government created an industry and a community dependence on public forests. In Bruce Babbitt's words: "The bad guys are all here in Washington. The bad guys are the people at the top here in Washington who, for their own purposes, decided to perpetrate a fraud on the Pacific Northwest." With so clear an understanding of the problem, the question is: Why does the solution so much resemble the fraud?

In sum, the proposed 1.2 to 2-billion-board-foot cut levels are merely a base line to which will be added unlimited salvage logging.

has become on what is essentially publicly-subsidized welfare logging, an industry spokesman from Forks, WA said of the President's \$1.2 billion package: "His jobs retraining plan is a joke." If it is a joke, it is a joke that has not been shared by workers layed-off from the steel industry, the auto industry, from retail and manufacturing, from IBM, and a dozen other slumping industries.

Political Cleansing

Meanwhile, with the public focused on summit events, the Forest



Native Forest Council instrumental in securing letter of protest from American Institute of Architects

Chicago, IL

On June 21, 1993, The American Institute of Architects (AIA), on behalf of the international architectural community, sent a letter to President Clinton asking him to save the ancient forests of the Pacific Northwest.

The reading of the letter by Susan A. Maxman, President of the AIA, received an ovation from several thousand attendees of the World Congress of Architects, meeting in its final day of a four-day conference, that focused on environmentally sustainable design.

The letter was the result of a four-month effort by Kris Moorman, the Native Forest Council's Midwest regional representative. Ms. Moorman worked with a number of principals within the AIA, convincing them of the importance of publicly stating their opposition to the unsustainable and destructive management practices that are liquidating the last of the public's ancient forests.



THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE
OF ARCHITECTS

Architects send letter to President Clinton protesting commercial logging

June 21, 1993

The President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Mr. President:

Representatives of the entire architectural community, representing nearly a million architects worldwide, have assembled for the first time in history, and have announced this day our Declaration on Interdependence with the natural world. On behalf of The American Institute of Architects, I entreat you to consider the following principles with regard to the fate of the remaining ancient forest ecosystems of the Pacific Northwest, one of our world's irreplaceable natural treasures.

Please protect all remaining ancient forests as permanent reserves for the benefit of the world's future generations. No commercial logging should be permitted.

Please assist local communities in the Pacific Northwest in their difficult transition to balanced, sustainable economies without any further degradation of the ancient forests and their ecosystems.

Please institute a process whereby degraded forestlands are returned to a state of biological complexity and diversity and maintained forever in this condition by sustainable forestry practices.

We consider this matter of utmost importance and urgency and appreciate your shared commitment to the preservation of the last vestiges of the truly natural world.

Respectfully,

Susan A. Maxman, FAIA
President
The American Institute of Architects

An "Unhealthy" Forest is Not Sick

by Edward Flattau

The statement that "an unhealthy forest is not sick" may sound like the mother of all incongruities. But for forestry experts with an academic orientation in biology or ecology, the phrase makes eminently good sense.

They view the disease and insect infestations that periodically beset woodlands as not only a natural but necessary part of the cycle that produces healthy, biologically diverse forests. One of the disciples of this school of thought,

"Diseases and insects are the engines that drive forest succession..."

Professor Arthur Partridge of the University of Idaho, notes that many trees in the interior of the Pacific Northwest are turning brown from major outbreaks of root disease, mountain pine beetles and spruce budworms.

However, contrary to the way the timber production-minded U.S. Forest Service perceives the situation, Partridge does not find this "brownout" cause for alarm. He considers the affliction to be nature's instrument for weeding out the weaker species and replacing them with genetically superior, more disease-resistant kinds of trees—a classic exercise of natural selection.

For example, mountain pine beetles in Oregon and Idaho have killed off sufficient seral lodgepole pine to make room for several relatively stable species of firs to flourish.

Tussock moth epidemics in Eastern Oregon's Blue Mountains 15 years ago finished off disease-ridden Douglas fir, thereby thinning out the forest and stimulating new growth that has covered the slopes with more high-quality timber, Partridge says.

"Diseases and insects are the engines that drive forest succession," declared Partridge. "Forests are resilient and tend to heal themselves if allowed to do so."



Kristen Wermuth

You would never know this to hear the timber industry and its sympathizers within and outside the Forest Service tell it. They characterize blight and insect infestation on public lands as disasters of the first magnitude and push strenuously for salvaging the dead trees and spraying the surviving ones.

If diseases and insects were raising havoc on privately owned commercial tree plantations, industry's hue and cry for immediate human intervention would be much more defensible. When one is trying to

Disease has no business being used as a rationale to raze any publicly owned timberlands...

maximize a tract's timber production in as short a time as possible, natural disruption can indeed be detrimental to that objective.

The trouble is that the Forest Service has adopted the loggers' perspective in its management of national forests, even though the law requires that such lands not be treated as plantations.

Roy Keene, a forestry consultant in Eugene, OR [and the Native Forest

Council's consulting forester-Ed.] summed up the situation aptly: "Our forest managers may consent

"...they still react as though natural disturbances are the enemy."

to the science that fire, insects, disease and wind are all vital components of a healthy forest ecosystem, but they still react as though natural disturbances are the enemy. The bureaucratic over-reaction is enforced by budgets, tree-farm mentalities, and the politically influential timber industry."

Filled with silviculturists who graduated from schools of agriculture that stress timber yields as the primary management objective, the Forest Service doesn't take natural recovery into account in its environmental-impact statements to justify its caretaker plans. Only tree deterioration and loss are recognized in line with the Forest Service's timber-production predilection.

Managing national forests essentially like tree farms has the unhappy consequence of diminishing biodiversity through clearcutting

and widespread use of toxic chemicals.

Partridge argues that in most national-forest tracts earmarked for some timber cutting, natural recovery from blight and infestations occurs on average over a 15 to 20-year period and ultimately produces as good or better crops for harvesting than plantations do.

And since these trees are growing on lands that the private lumber companies are only supposed to farm selectively anyway, several decades are a perfectly reasonable incubation period.

Disease thus has no business being used as a rationale to raze any publicly owned timberlands, much less level what little remains of our biologically unique old-growth forests. Rather than an aberration, natural disturbances are as much a part of the ancient-forest ecosystem as the fresh green saplings that follow in their wake.

Reprinted from *The Oregonian* newspaper, 5/12/93

**If you're a Sierra Club member...
reading this page may be the most powerful thing
you'll ever do for the forests!**

Sierra Club members seek to reform the Club's forest policy

*“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot
nothing is going to get better, it's not.”*

Dr. Seuss, from *The Lorax*

Are you a Sierra Club member who got mad as hell when the Club's representative testified at the Forest Summit, before a national audience, and told the president that he was "not against log exports?" Would it anger you to know that the co-chairs of the Sierra Club's National Forest Sub-committee feel that: a) stopping the logging of public forests would not be "moral" and, b) that designating all public forest lands as wilderness "would probably harm biodiversity?" If so, then you have an opportunity to reform the Club's national forest policy.

Let's be clear. We are not ungrateful for the many honorable and vital accomplishments of the Sierra Club. But its endless willingness to make concessionary deals creates the very "political reality" that the Club sites as the primary source of its devotion to compromise. Belief in an antagonistic political reality, in effect, becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. The result is the perception that environmentalists have at least one thing in common with President Clinton: both will fold under pressure.

The advice that David Brower (*Sierra Club Executive Director, '52-'64*) gave to then Sierra Club Conservation Chair Doug Scott still rings true: "Compromise is often necessary but it ought not originate with the Sierra Club."

Perhaps the last straw was the Club's insistent support of the disastrous Montana Wilderness Bill, which would save over one million acres of rocks and ice while releasing over four million forested acres to logging and other extractive industries. Activists within the Sierra Club are spearheading a campaign to change the Club's forest policy.

Will you help?

If 1,400 members sign a petition requesting adoption of a new forest policy, the Board of Directors must either adopt that policy or put it to a vote of the entire Sierra Club membership.

We would welcome an opportunity for the Sierra Club's members to be heard. Many do not even realize, for example, that during the struggle to save the ancient forests, the Club has not publicly opposed clearcutting. Members, we believe, both assume and want the Sierra Club to be in the forefront of forest conservation efforts. It is our hope that the garnering of these signatures will give voice to their aspirations and precipitate a shift in policy, returning the Sierra Club to its visionary roots.

The proposed policy change reads as follows:

The Sierra Club supports eliminating logging for wood and fiber production of all public forests. This should be accomplished through: 1) Immediately ending commercial logging in all roadless areas, old-growth, virgin, and ancient forests, and other sensitive areas, and 2) phasing out, as soon as practical, logging for timber or fiber production of other public forests in conjunction with reducing consumption of wood and fiber, a transition to diverse and sustainable rural economies, and the promotion of sound forestry practices on private land.

This change in policy is overdue and would immediately shift the parameters of the forest debate by creating a new "political reality." For as long as an organization as prestigious as the Sierra Club invites more logging of national forests, there is every incentive for politicians to simply ignore meaningful solutions which would put a stop to the twisted and wasteful abuses of public lands.

To circulate petitions, or to send your individual endorsement of the policy change, write to:

*Downstate Office
Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club
223 Market St.
Alton, IL 62002*



photo by Trygve Steen

YES! *I want the Sierra Club to support eliminating logging of all public lands.*

Name: _____

Address: _____

Membership Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Mail coupon to: Sierra Club, 223 Market St., Alton, IL 62002

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 to Oppose Option 9, Support a Zero Cut Solution

Write, call or fax administration officials and your congressional delegation today. Ask them to oppose Option 9 and to create an option that would ban logging and provide permanent protection for all remaining native forests nationwide. Let them know that sufficiency language, which would limit citizens' appeals, judicial review, and override existing environmental laws, will not be tolerated by the American public.

President Clinton
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500
phone: (202) 456-1111
fax: (202) 456-2461

Vice President Gore
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500
phone: (202) 456-1111
fax: (202) 456-7044

Secretary Bruce Babbitt
U.S. Dept. of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240
(202) 208-7351 fax: 208-6956

Secretary Mike Espy
U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
14th St. & Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250
phone: (202) 720-3631 fax: 720-5437

Asst. Secretary Jim Lyons
U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
14th St. & Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250
phone: (202) 720-7173 fax: 720-4732

Ms. Katie McGinty
Director, Office of Env. Policy
Room #360, the OEOB
Washington, DC 20501
(202) 456-6224 fax: 456-2710

Mr. Tom Tuchmann
Special Asst. to the Secretary
U.S. Dept. of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240
(202) 208-4612 fax: 208-3144

Mr. Tom Collier
Chief of Staff,
Dept. of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240
(202) 208-7351 fax: 208-6956

Secretary Ron Brown
U.S. Dept. of Commerce
15th and Constitution
Washington, DC 20230
phone: (202) 482-2112
fax: (202) 482-4576

For additional numbers call the congressional switchboard at (202) 224-3121.

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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Yes! *I'll join the Native Forest Council and be part of the solution!*

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