

Forest Voice



FALL 2000

A Publication of the Native Forest Council

FREE

Who's Teaching Our Children?

The Corporate
Takeover of
Environmental
Education

Native Forest Council
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Our Worst Enemy: Us?

By Tim Hermach

My favorite line from Walt Kelly's (often ecological beyond its time) comic strip, *Pogo*, says it all: "We have seen the enemy and he is us." It's a line conservation groups could learn from. In the fight to save our public lands, I often fear that we have become our own worst enemy.

Notorious for long meetings, backroom dealings and bitter feelings, the splintered factions of our movement waste their precious time squabbling, compromising and cutting each other down. Staff retreats and conferences (a sink for both time and money) get bogged down by petty details and the yoke of consensus. Email discussion lists become electronic battlegrounds for flame wars, tapping even more of our scarce time and energy. How many hours have we wasted haggling for compromises, bickering in meetings, and nursing our egos instead of making real change in the streets, on Capitol Hill and in the woods?

The very industries that would raze our national heritage for a quick buck must be thrilled to see us spinning our wheels and cutting each other down.

When Julia Butterfly Hill descended from Luna, the towering redwood that was her home for over two years, her "allies" berated her for coming down too soon. For accepting too little. For making a deal with the enemy. How can anyone disparage this woman who has become a national symbol for the forests?

Would I, personally, have accepted the deal Julia Butterfly made?

No. Would I (if I were asked) have boldly told

her not to take the deal? Absolutely. Those of you who know me, know that I'm never bashful about my opinions. But will I criticize this woman who speaks (and listens) to trees now that she's come down from Luna? Never. I've never spent a night in a tree, let alone two full years!

We must begin to build each other up, instead of tearing each other down. We must begin to speak our minds boldly and openly for the sake of improving each other, not making a point. We must join together (as long as we share the same goals) and refuse to compromise, despite our differences.

Like individual fingers of the same hand, conservation groups are useless on their own. Formed into a fist, we could become powerful. We won't win until we stop fighting each another and unite to fight our true enemies: corrupt corporations and their political lackeys. We won't win until we learn to beat them at their own game and start aiming for the one



Tim Hermach, President and Founder

true victory: Forever Wild, the complete protection of all public lands. We won't win until we start concentrating on the finish line, instead of whatever we can get.

Creating a winning team won't be easy, but it can be

done. First, we must define our goal: total protection of all of America's publicly owned lands, the living life-support system that guarantees our very

survival. Then, we must unite with allies who totally support our goal: Conservationists, labor unions, social justice movements and others who share our vision 100%. Those who accept compromise or celebrate your losses as victories can join a different team. The team that will win this game is the one that focuses on the goalpost and doesn't quit until it has reached that goal.

We already know where we are: in the middle of an ecological crisis and an economic travesty. Once we agree where we want to be, we can debate all we like about the best way to get there, fine-tuning our strategies as we go. But, until we work together and set our sights on that Forever Wild target, we're still running in circles, while the trees keep falling and the machines keep destroying nature.

Yes, we have already uncovered our most powerful adversary. An adversary that we face everyday, whether we accept it or not. And that adversary is us.

**Like individual fingers of the same hand,
conservation groups are useless on their own.
Formed into a fist, we could become powerful.**

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Submission Guidelines

We welcome unsolicited submissions that address issues relevant to public lands protection and support the Native Forest Council's mission. If you would like us to return your work, please include a SASE.

Goodbye, Bill

Bill Black, who has served us well as assistant editor of our last two issues is moving to Georgia with his wife. Though we will miss him, Bill's help streamlining the production of the Voice will continue to make our job easier for years to come. Good luck, Bill!



The Native Forest Council is a nonprofit organization (donations are tax deductible) founded by a group of business and professional people alarmed by the willful destruction of our national forests. We believe a sound economy and a sound environment need not be incompatible and that current public land management practices are devastating to both.

The mission of the Native Forest Council is to provide visionary leadership and to assure the integrity of public land ecosystems, without compromising people or forests.

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Clinton: Sequoia Monument or Earth Day Hype?

On April 15, amid much media hype, President Clinton announced plans to create the 328,000 acre Sequoia National Monument. Comprising about one-third of California's Sequoia National Forest, the monument includes 34 groves of ancient sequoias. There is no management plan, map or budget, just a promise to "save" trees in a national forest that has been razed for decades. But the Forest

Service is already making plans to cut 28 million board feet in the monument area — four times the annual cut allowed in the entire Sequoia National Forest. National monuments are traditionally managed by the National Park Service, an agency that would likely have offered more complete protection. In addition to three years of logging, the Forest Service plans to continue permit grazing and motorized recreation in the "pre-served" area.

Brower Quits Sierra Club

On May 18, David Brower resigned from the Sierra Club, criticizing the organization for its "burgeoning bureaucracy." Brower, 88, was the Sierra Club's first executive director and a member since 1933. "As I approach 88, I need to spend some time on putting out fires, not on creating standing rules," said Brower, who blamed the organization's bureaucracy for "blocking a long list of Sierra Club actions."

Council Launches New Website

On September 11, the Council released its redesigned website (www.forestcouncil.org), providing users with easier navigation and a wealth of new resources. The site features easy e-mail activism for hot issues, weekly public-lands news picks from across the nation by Council President Tim Hermach, and environmental-education resources for parents and teachers.



Clinton Backs Off?

On May 10th, *The Washington Times* reported that the Clinton Administration "backed down" from Clinton's much-publicized October 13 directive to "save" the nation's forests. According to the *Times*, the administration plans to ban road-building in 43 million acres, but would let local foresters make decisions about logging, mining and the use of off-road vehicles. *Editor's Note: This was no surprise to the Native Forest Council. The Winter 2000 edition of Forest Voice ("Clinton's Latest Charade") explained that Clinton announced the directive would not stop the cutting by one single tree.*



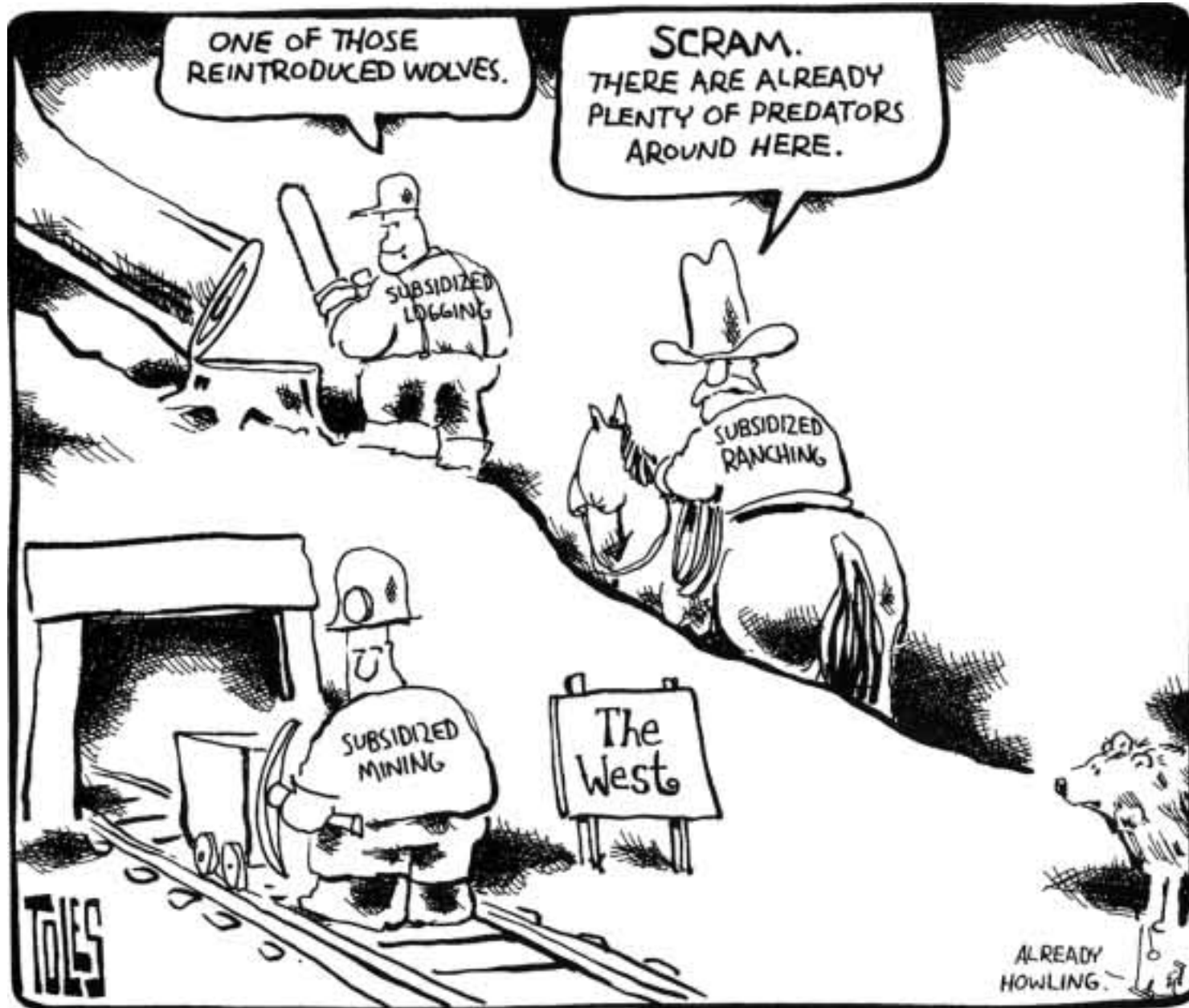
Council President Tim Hermach speaks at Shadow Convention

Hermach Speaks at Shadow Convention, Attends Democratic Convention in L.A.

On August 16th, Forest Council President Tim Hermach spoke at the Los Angeles Shadow Convention 2000, an event organized to parallel the Democratic National Convention and draw attention to issues critical to America's future that the parties avoid. Hermach addressed the importance of public lands protection. The Shadow Conventions parallel the Republican and Democratic Conventions. Speakers included Senators Russ Feingold (D-WI), John McCain (R-AZ), Governor Gary Johnson and Rev. Jesse Jackson. Hermach also attended the Democratic National Convention, promoting the inclusion of public lands in the national debate.

Conservationists and Unlikely Allies Sue Forest Service for Economic Waste

On May 18, a federal judge gave the green light to a ground breaking lawsuit filed by a coalition of environmental organizations, hunting and fishing groups and forest-dependent businesses. The coalition, led by Friends of the Earth and the Forest Conservation Council, alleges that planning documents and decisions to cut timber on national forests are illegal because the Forest Service has failed to consider values such as tourism, recreation, wildlife and "ecosystem services." According to John Talberth, Conservation Director for the Forest Conservation Council, "National Forests provide a stupendous array of goods and services simply by existing as natural ecosystems. The court inspected the record of the timber sales decisions, but could not find any analysis of all the values of standing forests. That is the very reason we brought this suit — because the U.S. Forest Service assumes the value of forests is zero." A final ruling on the case is expected in early fall.



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Who's Teaching Our Children?

How corporate polluters provide most of the "environmental" education in America's schools



*by John Borowski,
a science teacher at North Salem
High School in Salem, Oregon*

Often, the very organizations that preach the gospel of environmental education are actually industry skills. They have "earthy" names but clandestine roots.

Florida's Orange County Convention Center is big. Big enough to hold the Sears Tower, if you laid it on its side. So big you could walk 10 miles and never leave the cement behemoth. The electric bill is \$325,000 per month.

This decadent structure in Orlando seemed appropriate for the biggest corporate carnival-like setting of the National Science Teachers Convention, the largest gathering of educators in the nation. More than 14,000 science teachers and hundreds of exhibitors passed out armloads of pamphlets, packets, books, stickers, posters and other goodies for teachers.

Though there were a handful of conservation groups at the event, those of us sitting at the Native Forest Council booth were clearly in the minority. When I started teaching 20 years ago, I could never have imagined such a perverse display: Industries and their front groups trying to justify everything from deforestation to extinction of species.

Worse yet, they were targeting America's teachers and, ultimately, our children. Corporate America has sunk its claws into the last vestiges of (relatively) commercial free space left in our society: public schools. One of the pillars of our democracy, public education, is now for sale.

The Greening Earth Society passed out videos and "teachers' guides to the fallacies of global warming," mocking environmental concerns. Weyerhaeuser boasted of the recovery of Mt. St. Helens, as if this geologic event somehow justified clearcutting. The Temperate Forest Foundation offered "The Dynamic Forest Video." In this shrill presentation, insects and fire hurt forests, but industry provides the needed remedies to revive the ill forests of the nation—with

the help of chainsaws. The American Farm Bureau, avowed enemies of environmental education, propositioned teachers to reconsider the dangers of biocides.

They were selling lies, and teachers were buying—quickly filling their bags with curricula as corrosive as the pesticides that the Farm Bureau promotes. Where were the largest environmental groups to counter this frontal assault on eco education? Where was the outcry of the educational community? Their deafening silence was tantamount to complicit resignation.

Most people consider our public schools to be hallowed ground, where young Americans of various religions, races and social strata collectively learn the tools of citizenship. Yet multinationals now view our children's schools as breeding grounds for propaganda, marketplaces for debunking environmental concerns and the tip of an unimaginably profitable marketing iceberg. The stakes are incredibly high.

Although environmental education is becoming increasingly popular (at least 31 states now require environmental studies as a mandatory part of their curriculum), the corporate influence on curriculum is growing. For example, the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), just one of many industry-front groups working to promote corporate interests in education, has more than 220,000 members. Its current \$6-million campaign, "Building a Presence for Science," is sponsored by ExxonMobil, and will soon be implemented in 23 states and the District of Columbia, reaching more than 36 million students in 73,000 schools. The program invites the very industries that pollute our planet to help teachers develop curricula. The NSTA is currently complementing this campaign by introducing three bills in Congress that will create a "working group" to establish these national curriculum standards. Of the 16 people who will be appointed to this working group, seven will be directly tied to private industry, whereas no direct representation of environmental concerns will be included.

Education about the environment is being assaulted on two fronts. First, multi-national corporations are designing and distributing "environmental" curricula that are professionally produced, easy to use, often free and totally biased toward industry perspectives. Second, some of the most prominent right-wing think tanks in America are mounting a well-funded attack on genuine environmental education. Their objective is simple: protect industries that despoil the planet and defuse any potentially damaging influence of citizen awareness.

Backlash Against Education

What little genuine environmental education is available is under attack, often from industry front groups posing as grassroots citizens' organizations. We call them *Astroturf* organizations (because they pretend to be green, but are really artificial), and they're easy to spot: just follow the money.

- In Meridian, Ohio, the schoolboard has adopted guidelines that "Discussion should not reflect negative attitudes against business or industry."
- *The Lorax*, by Doctor Seuss has been banned in several school districts.
- One Texas group has protested capitalizing the word "Earth" in textbooks.
- The Alabama Family Alliance produced a book entitled *Facts, Not Fear*, a guide for fighting environmental education. The book claims that environmental education portrays humans as evil, that nature — as well as industry — pollutes the earth, and that the environment has actually improved during the past few decades.

Astroturf groups associated with "Facts, Not Fear":

American Enterprise Institute (reviewed chapters):
Backed by ARCO, Chevron, GE and drug companies.

Hoover Institute (reviewed chapters):
Backed by Ford, GM, Coors and Procter & Gamble.

Competitive Enterprise Institute (involved in publication):
Backed by American Petroleum Institute, Dow Chemical, GM, Philip Morris and Texaco.

Alliance for America (distributes copies)
Backed by mining, oil, logging, gas industries.



The spectrum of curricula is breathtaking and their shamelessness is overt. The American Nuclear Society provides "Let's Color and Do Activities With The Atoms Family." Materials I received from Exxon portray the Prince William Sound cleanup as a victory of technology, glossing over the cause of the disaster: the Exxon Valdez. But the most brazen campaign of miseducation is carried out by the timber industry.

Big timber spends millions on its thinly veiled national PR campaigns, touting them as educational programs (which, of course, they generously "donate" to public schools). They offer hikes, presentations, workshops for teachers and even camps for kids. They distribute books, posters, videos, lesson plans and other materials. Through the looking glass of big timber, they are the stewards — even saviors — of the forest, old growth forests become decadent "biological deserts" that need to be clearcut to survive and forests require management (by industry, of course), to thrive. Old growth forests are "void of wildlife" (so says the retired president of Willamette Industries). A timber company in my own community offers a hike in a small section of their forest. One activity resonates strongly with the kids, and can shrewdly confuse the most earnest educator. The activity begins when the largest child in the group plays the "big tree." The other children stand close to the "big tree" and crowd it.

"Choose three words that describe how you, the little trees, feel when you have more space to stretch out your branches," the guide asks. "Where can trees grow best: where they are all crowded together or where they are more spread out?" Then all the "little trees" scatter out, providing more space.

An accompanying workbook asks, "What is the 'C' word?" I think they mean "clearcut." I say it's "con job."

One logging industry website (www.forestinfo.org/ecolinks/education.htm) outlines big timber's cynical strategy: *By the school year 2003/2004 forty percent of the U.S. public school teachers will retire or otherwise leave the profession. If business wants the support of the public, it has to help the public understand and participate in public education.*

Often, the very organizations that preach the gospel of environmental education are actually industry shells. They have "earthy" names but clandestine roots. The American Forest Foundation has a list of co-sponsors, cooperators and partners that includes some of the most egregious despoilers of our forests: Sierra Pacific, friend of clearcuts in California, and Pacific Lumber, pillagers of the redwoods, not to mention MacMillian Bloedel, Willamette Industries and Boise Cascade. But the real story is found in one of AFF's "core programs," called Project Learning Tree. I first encountered PLT in the summer of 1995.

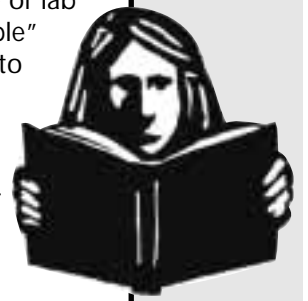
Asked to lead a tour of PLT-award winning teachers through Opal Creek in the Willamette National Forest, I arrived early at our meeting place by the clear waters of the Santiam River. Opal Creek, perhaps the most pristine intact low elevation forest in the Pacific Northwest, with its giant ancient trees, provided the backdrop on this sun filled day. Ironically, Opal Creek has been preserved thanks to the efforts of the very activists that organizations like PLT oppose.

I knew nothing about PLT, but the chance to hike and discuss old growth ecosystems with teachers from across the world was exciting. Kathy McGlaufflin, vice president of PLT, accompanied us on our sojourn. We walked two miles along some of Opal Creek's most spectacular scenery. Much to my surprise, Ms. McGlaufflin spoke more like a timber booster than an environmental education expert. In response to

What I learned in school today...

A few of the worst "environmental" lessons distributed to teachers by corporations.

- Exxon spent \$1.6 million to produce *The Energy Cube*, a package of lab experiments, texts and a video that asks students to make "responsible" energy choices. The program describes gasoline as solar power, fails to discuss the connection between petroleum and pollution, and tells them offshore oil drilling is good for fishing.
- A report in the *New York Times* (4/26/98) exposed a secret multi-million dollar boondoggle orchestrated by the oil industry: "Educational" kits created to convince kids that global warming is not happening.
- Chevron, a member of the Global Climate Coalition (an industry front group that pays scientists to debunk global warming) discusses global warming in its *Ecospeak* series for students. After spinning the information to suit its needs, *Ecospeak* claims that nobody knows what the impact will be or what we should do about global warming (if anything). Rather than address what Chevron, one of the world's single largest contributors to climate change, can do, the series concludes with everyday things for kids to do. Their solution to global warming? Rather than work for real change, kids should use energy-saving light bulbs, ride their bicycles and recycle.
- In *Let's Talk About Clearcutting*, a coloring book distributed by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry (funded by taxpayer dollars), young children are told that some people don't like clearcuts simply because they "look bad." The book goes on to claim that clearcutting actually helps forests.
- Project Learning Tree, an organization backed by the logging industry's American Forest Foundation, uses sophisticated techniques in mass psychology and public relations to present itself as eco-friendly. By targeting both students and teachers, PLT is an effective PR machine for the timber industry.
- In a video distributed to schools by Mobil (at no cost, of course), kids learn that plastics are ideal to produce, recycle, burn and dump in landfills.



every point I made about the destruction of our national forests, Ms. McGlaufflin would reveal her true colors. It seemed inconceivable that a representative of this organization could be so misinformed and plain wrong with critical data.

I explained that native forests have been overcut and replanted, creating one-species tree farms instead of forest ecosystems. She said this was based on my personal opinion, not facts.

Most memorable was her claim that "apple orchards could be considered forest ecosystems."

I later found out that PLT is an industry front group, backed by timber dollars. The organization's website and printed materials look like something produced by an environmental group. They boast a "network of 3,000 grassroots volunteers and over 100 state coordinators." But this grassroots veneer is a shrewd greenwash. And, unfortunately, it's working.

Formed in 1970 when "the forest products industry recognized the need for a balanced program for the nation's schools," PLT works to promote paper products, logging and industrial "management" of our nation's forests. PLT offers "environmental" education to students from pre-kindergarten to twelfth grade. It claims to have reached more than 500,000 educators and 25 million students.

PLT's "educational" materials are damning enough. But, as the saying goes, if you want the truth, follow the money.

Corporate America has sunk its teeth into one of the last vestiges of (relatively) commercial-free space left in our society: public schools. Public education is now for sale.

Corporate Charlatans

Booths set up by corporations and industry front groups outnumbered true environmental education presentations twenty-to-one in an attempt to spread corporate science throughout our nation's public schools.

Opposite: The massive Orange County, FL. Convention Center. Left: The *Project Learning Tree* booth, a front-group for the logging industry. Center: The Institute for Chemical Education provides information favorable to the petrochemical industry. Right: Spokespeople proclaim the joys of plastics.



The industries that bankroll PLT include some of the nation's most corrupt logging companies.

Surreptitious public relations campaigns, deceptive advertising and undue media influence have been around as long as corporations themselves — even longer. But the battle today (much like the battle against Big Tobacco) is for the hearts and minds of our children, their health, their collective futures.

Most important, we must highlight the wonders of true environmental education. There are thousands of wonderful teachers enlightening their students every day. They need funding, and it is incumbent upon society to see that schools and teachers don't have to go begging to industry.

Will we turn over our public learning centers to those who see our children as pawns in the game of quarterly profits? We are facing the prospect of creating a generation of apathetic and jaded young adults, with little interest in social or political issues, believing that corporate technology will save the day and activism is for someone else. What are the solutions?

First, the environmental community must call corporate America on its sham. I can't imagine, for example, why the North American Association of Environmental Education (the largest environmental education group in the world) has endorsed Project Learning Tree. We must refuse to make "alliances" with those who try to manipulate our children and remove corporate polluters from their board of directors. We must take a stand and work for what is right, not what is politically feasible.

At a recent conference, an environmental education activist told me that we need to be more centrist in our approach to solving this problem. But I can't take the middle of the road on this one. My children are not salable property. Would good parents compromise on the welfare of their child? Industry isn't centrist, but we environmentalists try to avoid conflict. And that is why we lose. As long-time forest activist Mike Donnelly often says, "We have compromised this baby so many times, we are down to the toenails."

The frontline warriors in this winnable war must be the parents. They must demand that any curricula provided by corporate sources be reviewed, just like the textbook adoption processes. They must challenge their local boards of education to keep their local schools commercial-free. They must ask their children to share the materials they receive at school. Corporate predators in education are no different than those who peddle tobacco to our children. They must bear the scorn of society and be stopped in their tracks.

Most importantly, we must highlight the wonders of true environmental education. There are thousands of excellent teachers enlightening their students every day. They need funding, and it is incumbent upon society to see that schools don't have to go begging to industry.

good guys

Great references and resources for parents and teachers involved with environmental education.

■ *Living in the Environment*, by G. Tyler Miller: The optimal "go to" book for lesson plans, organizational ideas, includes steps and solutions for each unit. Packed with enlightening charts, graphs, and other visual aids.

■ *State of the World* (series), by World Watch Institute: An indispensable classroom reference, this series and other pamphlets (Worldwatch Papers) are the most widely accepted source of environmental data, and are well organized and footnoted.

■ *The Native Forest Council*, www.forestcouncil.org: Our new website is home to a wide array of resources to aid teachers in preparing and presenting quality environmental education. Lesson plans, book reviews, and a wealth of links to environmental organizations and information are available.

Telling the Truth

Native Forest Council's booth at the National Science Teachers Convention was a lone voice for the forests in a sea of corporate greenwash. From left to right: Council Regional Rep. Wayne Norton, Regional Rep. Robin Smith, member John Borowski (teacher and author) and President Tim Hermach.

What can you do?

Seeing what passes for environmental education is enough to frustrate any parent or community member. However, you can influence teachers, school boards and local officials. Many simply do not realize that the materials they use to teach students about the earth may have been produced by the very corporations that are destroying it.

Parents:

✓ Pay attention to the materials your children bring home. Find out who produced them.

✓ Work with your kids, to find out the sources of their environmental curriculum and ask them how these sources might influence the accuracy of the information. Learning to question information, consider sources, and research differing viewpoints is an important lesson in life.

✓ Ask teachers to consider the sources of their environmental curriculum, and explain why this is important. Many teachers simply do not know that seemingly "green" organizations are often industry front groups. Offer to provide alternatives (contact the Council for more information).

Teachers:

✓ Invite students to participate. Students — especially teenagers — love to question what they've been told. Invite them to compare and contrast different information on environmental topics.

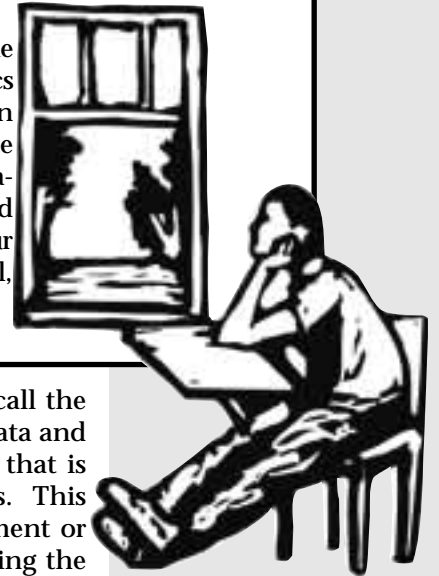
✓ Focus on incentives and credibility. What would the source have to gain by distributing misleading information? What are the qualifications of the source providing the information?

Everyone:

✓ Contact corporations producing misleading materials and express your concern — as a parent and a potential consumer.

✓ Contact school boards, superintendents, principals and science teachers (even if you're not a parent) and ask them to carefully scrutinize environmental science materials.

✓ Foster a fascination with nature. Consider the age of the child before discussing these issues. Topics such as global warming, deforestation and extinction are complex, potentially-frightening and beyond the grasp of young children. Foster their natural fascination with nature by teaching them to notice and respect the world around them. Emphasize what our natural resources provide (clean air, water and soil, medicines and seeds for the foods we eat).



And teachers must begin to comprehend what I call the "teachable moment": that indelible moment when data and caring and insight all merge as one, representing all that is good about ecological sciences in public schools. This moment does not require a slick video, fancy equipment or corporate funding. Just students and teachers, exploring the natural world.

From discussing *A Sand County Almanac* in the classroom, to hiking in the giant cedars of Opal Creek; From identifying invertebrates in our majestic tidal pools to exploring Mell Creek on our campus, I've seen children connect to their world. This year alone, I've watched over two dozen seniors choose environmental topics for their senior projects. Three boys are examining the breaching of the Snake River dams. Another young man is painting a mural on our school. Education emboldens young citizens to commit their accrued knowledge to action.

Children care, and they expect us as adults to lead, to represent their best interests, to protect them from exploitative commercial influences. To make America safe for childhood again is a battle worth fighting.

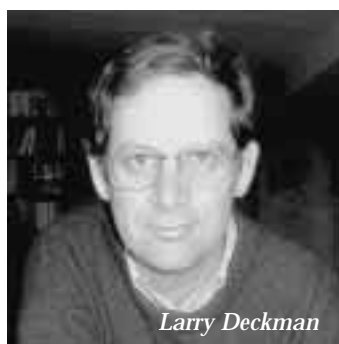
For more information on environmental education, please visit our website: www.forestcouncil.org.



Annual Report

The last year of the new millenium marked the first year of Native Forest Council's new campaign: **Forever Wild**. And we've hit the ground running. After more than a decade of fighting destructive logging on America's publicly-owned lands (and learning about the other threats to these precious national resources), we've expanded our mission to address mining, grazing, drilling and motorized "wreckreation" that threatens our national forests and parks, BLM lands and wildlife preserves. As we did with Zero Cut, we're starting with education and coalition building. By teaching U.S. citizens about the costly destruction of their public lands, we can begin to turn the tide. At the same time, we've been working to further Zero Cut and create new (and often unlikely) alliances. In this four-page annual report insert, we bring you up-to-date on what we've accomplished during the past year and what lies ahead for the Council. And we'd like the opportunity to show our appreciation to our most important ally: you. Thanks to the support members like you, we're wrapping up a successful 2000, as well.

Deckman Joins Council Board



Larry Deckman

by Ed Dorsch

This spring, attorney Larry Deckman joined the Council's board of directors. Offering legal expertise, a passion for nature and a different view on just about everything else, Deckman is a welcome asset to our team.

—Editor Ed Dorsch

As always, Larry Deckman is exuberant. Before he even sits down, he shows me his new book, *The Diversity of Life* by Edward O. Wilson. "You *have* to read this," he says. I can tell he's not dropping names. He genuinely wants me to read this book. And several dozen others.

We order lunch, then I start my questions.

Deckman moved to Oregon from Los Angeles at the age of 17, later married a school teacher and now practices what he calls preventative law: contracts, wills and trusts. "Much of the court system today is lawyers butting heads at the expense of their clients," he says, "so I practice non-advocacy law."

Then he takes over the interview.

"Let me make this easy for you," he says, "Law is just one of the windows I look through. And a house has many windows."

"OK," I say, "So what's one of the other windows?"

"I invented this." He pulls out *The Star Finder*: two plastic discs that spin around each other, showing the constellations throughout the year. "It glows in the dark."

An avid astronomer and inventor, Deckman has created games, posters and voluminous notebooks filled with what he calls "schemes." And he has many new ideas for the Council.

At the Council's March board meeting, Deckman was invited to join the board of directors. After accepting the offer, he quoted conservative George Will, who criticized environmentalists for being so negative. "We're always against something," Deckman told the board "It's time we were *for* something."

This unique way of seeing things — the ability to see through uncommon windows and gain new insight — seems to come naturally to Deckman. Like the way stargazing first sparked his interest in environmental issues. "The sky was better 25 years ago," he says, "and if you can't see the stars, then something is in the way."

Deckman first joined the Council after meeting Tim Hermach, who told him about the subsidized destruction of our national forests. "I'm a true conservative," says Deckman, "I don't want to see financial mismanagement. How can the Forest Service lose money cutting down trees? It's nothing radical to stop logging on national forests."

Other windows? Deckman enjoys golfing. He serves as treasurer of the local library board. He loves to hike the Adirondacks. And there's always something to read.

"I'm reading 40 books right now," he says.

After lunch, we browse in a nearby bookstore. "That's one of mine," Deckman says, pointing to an astronomy poster. He persuades me to buy a pack of book darts: thin copper page markers that slide onto the page. They're one of his favorite inventions. "Forty books," he says, "I'm not kidding. I have to keep my place."

I'm a true conservative. I don't want to see financial mismanagement. How can the Forest Service lose money cutting down trees? It's nothing radical to stop logging on national forests."

-Larry Deckman,
newest Forest

1999 in Review

A successful year...

Negotiated an agreement with the Forest Service to provide more information and earlier notification about land exchanges to environmental groups. President Tim Hermach and forester Roy Keene surveyed an exchange in the Snoqualmie National Forest with Jack Craven, top Forest Service official in charge of land exchanges and Paul Tittman, the chief land appraiser, showing them what the public had lost to timber corporations.

Launched our Forever Wild multimedia presentation, created by Robin Smith, a former EPA scientist and national park ranger working for the Council. Smith is continuing to educate communities and garner new members across the Midwest.

Developed and participated in lawsuits against the Forest Service asserting that the Clinton Forest Plan has failed to protect endangered species and a challenge to federal agencies' management of publicly owned lands on the basis of economics and their mandate to manage lands for the "highest and best use."

Coordinated letters from members flooding the Forest Service with demands that Clinton's roadless plan include protection of *all* national forests, not just a few roadless areas.

Attended the largest gathering of science teachers in the nation to fight corporate influence on environmental education, inform teachers and provide alternative information for schools across America.

Working Assets chose the Native Forest Council as a **leading cause** for the second time.

Media Work: Helped Time Magazine produce its extensive series on corporate welfare and gave it the latest information about land exchanges and anti-environmental riders, provided maps of America's shrinking forests to NBC Nightly News, gave the The Washington Post the scoop on Clinton's roadless directive and helped them tell the truth behind his political charade.

Using our media contacts, helped the Religious Campaign for the Environment, and others, distribute press releases.

Updated our rapid response network an e-mail list of thousands who depend on our daily updates, news digest and action alerts.

Distributed our newspaper, the Forest Voice to thousands of readers nationwide.

Built alliances with the United Steelworkers Union, broadening our support network.

Thank You.

Thanks to your support, we're continuing to lead the fight for your publicly owned lands.

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Native Forest Council Member Gwen Marshall

When Gwen Marshall presented Congressman Yates, then Chairman of Interior Appropriations, with a handwritten note and some homemade brownies, he thought she was trying to just sneak in some lobbying time.

"It was strange. Here was this woman giving a Congressman a plate of brownies," says Marshall, "he became very, well, Congressional." Until he realized that she was genuinely trying to thank him for his hard work on behalf of the forest in his bill.

Thanking a Congressman with brownies might be unusual on Capitol Hill, but it's not unusual for Marshall. A member of the Native Forest Council since 1992, this substitute high school teacher is as comfortable testifying before Congressional committees as she is teaching a class of high school students. A fifth-generation Cincinnati resident, Marshall travels to Washington D.C. several times a year to lobby Congress on conservation and other issues.

Her secret? Be real.

"Most lobbyists tell leaders what they want to hear. That's their biggest mistake," says Marshall. "I don't go in and say I'm so-and-so with such-and-such, I just say, I'm from Cincinnati, and here's what's going on. And you have to stay on it." It's a strategy that has made her a Washington insider and gained her access to the inaccessible.

But lobbying doesn't end in the committee meeting room, says Marshall. "Testimony is five minutes. What you then have to do is take your testimony out to the public." She distributes written comments and carries a notebook with photographs and other materials related to the topic of the day.

Marshall participates in other political activities as well. During the recent WTO protests, she went to Seattle to do whatever she could to help. She even folded papers and picked trash when it was needed. Most recently, she was the top sig-

nature gatherer in Ohio to put Ralph Nader on the presidential ballot in that state. She also encourages her students to lobby Congress.

Marshall first became interested in the Native Forest Council when she saw President Tim Wirth speak at the Heartwood Forest Council in May of 1991, and then spoke with him.

A year later, she called Tim on the phone to discuss a disagreement on a key forest strategy.

"I kept hammering on him," she says. Her strong will made her a good match for the Council, and she respected Tim's straightforward approach as well.

"Tim is strong-willed, and I like him. He has a basic agenda and he sticks with it. Even if we disagree on some of the ways to get there, we want the same results. He means what he says and he tries very hard. He's stayed with his goal all along the way."

That goal is an end to the destruction of all publicly owned land — a goal Marshall shares.

Many of the beltway environmental groups become ineffective because they have become dependent on money from corporate foundations. "They seem to spend a lot of time finding reasons for why they can't do something. I say: Just do it!"

After campaigning for Nader and the Green Party, Marshall plans to continue her efforts to convince Congress to protect publicly owned lands. She is also working to end the government subsidies that make unrecycled paper cheaper than more sustainable raw materials, and hurt industries that are working to bring ecologically sound products to consumers who want them.

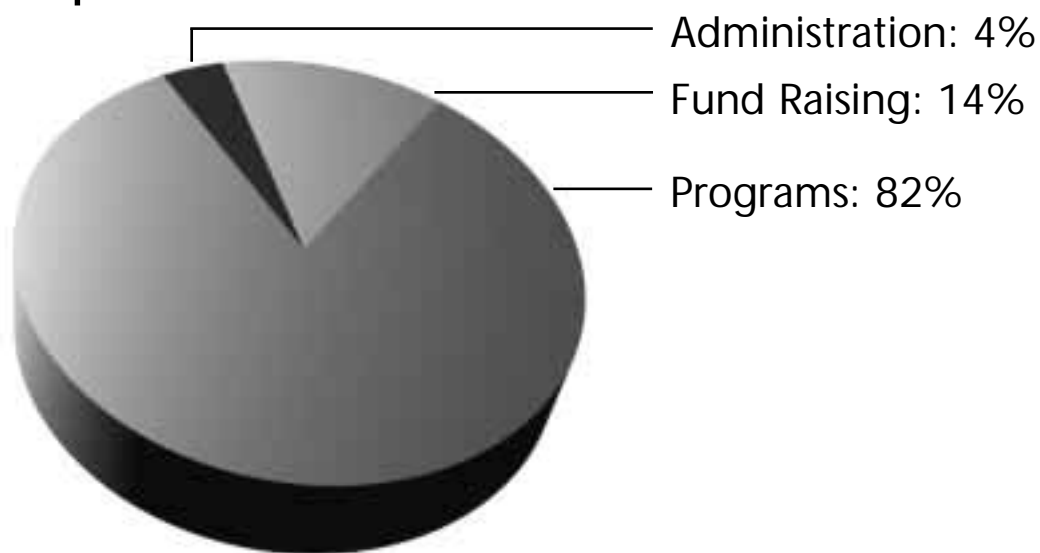


Gwen Marshall

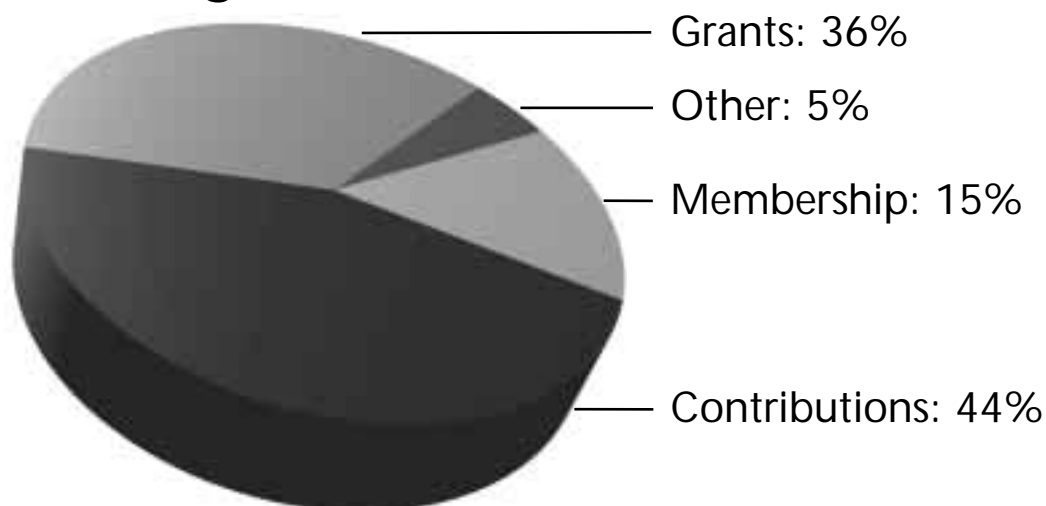
Gwen Marshall is as comfortable testifying before Congressional Committees as she is teaching a class of high school students.

1999 Financial Report

Expenses



Funding Sources



A year of growing. Thanks to members like you.

Thanks to members like you, Native Forest Council expanded its operations efficiently and sensibly in 1999. With only four percent of our expenditures earmarked toward administration, and just 14% for fund raising, we were able to allocate the 82% of our income to programs and expand our membership.

By freeing up the lion's share of our resources for education, litigation and grassroots organizing, we made the most of contributions from members and foundations. Organizing national campaigns and litigation from a central hub, our Oregon office, made production and networking efficient, while a nationwide web of regional representatives and volunteers distributed materials and implemented programs. Professional volunteers and skilled interns help us produce top notch materials with minimal cost.

As a true citizens' organization, the Council receives most of its income from individuals, rather than grants. And we hope to continue this increase in membership support. Because of our uncompromised commitment to protecting public lands and our nonpartisan approach, the Council must rely on foundations that don't pander to corporations. We are grateful for the support we've received from a limited number of foundations, and we are focusing on continued expansion of our membership base. The trend of membership growth that began in 1999 is continuing well into 2000, reflecting our 14% investment in fund raising — an investment that will reap high returns in the future.

This Land is Your Land

*This land is your land,
this land is my land.
From California to the New York Island,
From the Redwood Forest,
to the Gulf Stream waters,
This land was made for you and me.*

—Woody Guthrie, 1940

By Brian Back

The Forest Service doesn't have to answer to shareholders. But shouldn't it answer to taxpayers like "you and me"?

An altruistic, national pride resonates in those bygone words. Guthrie, we can assume, was musing about public land. Sixty years later, the logging of public lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service is an enterprise that loses about \$1.2 billion annually. Thank goodness the Forest Service doesn't have to answer to shareholders. But shouldn't it answer to taxpayers like "you and me"?

According to the balance sheets, the clear-cut ranges in national forests represent economic dysfunctionality. A report released last week by both the Forest Conservation Council and Forest Guardians outlines the federal timber program's financial feasibility. The Economic Case Against National Forest Logging argues that national forest lands can be far more valuable to rural communities when left standing.

While the Forest Service's logging program places it \$1.2 billion in the red each year, accounting methods do not include the costs of cleaning up logging sediment in rivers, the costs of protecting hordes of dwindling wildlife species, or the losses to businesses supporting recreation and tourism. In recent years, recreation in the 191-million-acre national forest system has become a booming enterprise.

Sometimes, it is difficult to break down systems in place, even when those systems are doing more harm than good. In corporate circles, solving such problems is often referred to as "thinking outside of the box."

The following are the report's major findings, which dare to do just that: Recreation, hunting and fishing in national forests contribute at least \$111 billion to the gross domestic product and generate nearly 3 million jobs each year. These uses, which gather more demand every year, contribute 32 times more value to the GDP and 38.1 times more jobs than the federal timber program.

Lost recreational opportunities and scenery, increased water filtration costs, wildfire, death, injury and property damage are among many externalized costs of logging not calculated by the Forest Service when it reports to the U.S. Congress.

National forests provide habitat for tens of thousands of wild pollinators, which contribute \$4 to \$7 billion to the U.S. agricultural economy each year.

National forests supply over 530 million acre-feet of clean water each year to municipalities, businesses and rural residents. The value of this water for consumptive purposes alone is estimated at \$3.7 billion per year. In addition, national forests sequester over 53 million metric tons of carbon from the atmosphere each year, a function valued at about \$3.4 billion per year.

Federal timber now accounts for less than 10 percent of all wood logged in the Pacific Northwest and less than 0.2 percent of total employment in the region affected in the Northwest Forest Plan. In other words, federal logging is increasingly difficult to justify here, particularly when jobs can be created reversing the damage caused by decades of logging.

The forest plan has been a floundering hotcake since Judge William Dwyer halted timber sales west of the Cascade crest a few years ago. Dwyer ruled that the government violated the forest plan's "clear, plain and unmistakable" requirement to conduct wildlife surveys prior to logging old forests.

In response, the Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service recently proposed dramatic changes to the forest plan.



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Logging operations in the Eagle Cap range, eastern Oregon.

Those changes would open the doors to widespread logging of unprotected old-growth forests on public land.

Earlier this month, Congressman David Wu (D-OR) co-wrote a letter to George Frampton, chairman of President Bill Clinton's Council of Environmental Quality. The letter, signed by 11 other Northwest members of Congress, asked that the government consider another option to merely consider ending old-growth logging on public lands affected by the Northwest Forest Plan.

Public opinion polls continuously show that most Americans think logging the last remaining ancient forests on public land is unacceptable.

Leading corporations, including Home Depot and Kinkos, have pledged to stop using old-growth wood in company products.

When will the managers of our public land get on board? Supposedly, that land belongs to you and me.

Right: The snow-covered clearcuts of the Coeur d'Alene National Forest, Idaho, in 1997.



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Act Now! Contact the Native Forest Council: www.forestcouncil.org or Brian J. Back at: bback@amcity.com; phone: 503.219-3419.

Wildfire?

By Karin Riley Thron

Photos by Doug Riley Thron

The Fires of 2000

As of our press date, more than 6.2 million acres of forest and wildland have burned in 13 western states this summer.

Capitalizing on dramatic media reports, timber corporations have already launched a media assault to use this year's fire season to justify increased logging in our national forests.

But logging won't stop fires. In fact, it makes them worse. Throughout the summer, officials are discovering what fire ecologists have said all along: The hottest, most-destructive fires burn in areas that have already been logged. Logging removes the largest trees (trees that would survive a fire) opening the forest canopy and drying out the brush and smaller trees below.

During a burn, the brush becomes fuel and the smaller trees act as "fire ladders", taking flames to the few large trees that remain. Logging operations leave flammable debris, and roaded areas bring in more of the greatest cause of wildfires: humans, who are responsible for four times as many forest fires as lightning.

Get Involved

Timber corporations are using forest fires as a loophole to log large tracts of ancient forest currently protected by law. And, with the help of the Forest Service, are trying to use fire as a justification for increased logging. This is a crucial time for concerned citizens to make their opinions known:

✓ Write the Six Rivers and Shasta-Trinity National Forest and insist that no logging take place in the areas affected by the Big Bar Fires. Suggest they make the entire area a Fire Process Research Natural Area for studying wildfire.

*Shasta-Trinity National Forest Supervisor Sharon Heywood
2400 Washington Avenue
Redding, CA 96001*

*Six Rivers National Forest Supervisor Lou Wolterling
1330 Bayshore Way
Eureka, CA 95501*

✓ Write Forest Service Chief Mike Dombeck and demand greater accountability in firefighting expenditures and environmental damage caused by firefighting.

*Mike Dombeck
Forest Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Sidney R. Yates Federal Building
201 14th Street, SW at
Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250*

When fire strikes a nearby forest, a writer learns that the Forest Service can suspend the law and log the wilderness.

The fall thunderstorms of northern California brought wildfire to the mountain above our house last year. Here in the steep mountains of the Klamath Knot, fire returns to the forest every ten to fifty years, typically clearing the underbrush but not killing the trees. Along with the fire, I witnessed firsthand the damage firefighting can cause.

Nationwide, firefighting on public lands costs taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars per year. Forest Service officials admit publicly that because pressure "to do something" is so great, much of the time they spend money on expensive tactics that they know will not help to put the fire out. Legal loopholes currently allow timber corporations to log the public's endangered ancient forests following a fire. This practice continues despite scientific evidence that logging after a fire disturbs the rebirth of vegetation and other natural forest cycles.



Log stacks from salvage logging in the burn area

The Forest Service justifies their policy by claiming that "dangerous levels of fuels" in the forest will provoke future wildfires, and that fuels should be removed by logging. According to the US Government's own 1996 study, however, logging in national forests increases the risk of forest fires more than any other human activity.

Two years ago, after years of searching, my husband Doug and I discovered a parcel of land surrounded by the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Where could we find better neighbors? The land is surrounded by misty ancient Douglas fir forests, limbs hung with pale green moss, standing as they have been for thousands of years. Most other rural parcels in California, we had found, were surrounded by timber company lands — and clearcuts.

During our first visit to the land, my husband surveyed the vast tracts of ancient Doug firs almost as if he couldn't believe in their existence. "There's going to be a battle for this place. Soon," he said.

"Why?" I asked.

Because so little ancient forest remains, he said, timber companies would soon set their sights on this forest and pressure the Forest Service to allow them to log it.

On August 23, 1999, Doug, my son Tristen and I were sitting with our toes in the turquoise waters of the New River when a spectacular purple-grey thunderstorm ignited a wildfire on the mountain above us. Lightning struck in the Trinity Alps Wilderness a few miles away, and several fires began there as well.

Soon the town of Denny (population 25) became home to 2,000 yellow-shirted firefighters. As the dry season dragged on, the area was engulfed in smoke for months, often rendering trees 100 yards away invisible. Five fire engines and 50 Forest Service firefighters took up residence in our meadow.

The Forest Service told us they planned to drive a caterpillar tractor across our property and through the New River — a designated wild and scenic river that provides habitat for the endangered Coho Salmon and 30% of California's dwindling population of wild summer steelhead. They also planned to plow through a designated roadless area. Only the impassive steep cliffs across the river made them change their minds. Helicopters flew over our house for hours daily, dangling 1000-gallon buckets of water dipped from the New River or filled with Phos-Chek, a red-dyed ammonium phosphate said to be a fire retardant.

They intentionally set fires, or "backburns," with torches and dropped flame-balls from helicopters in a 23,000 acre perimeter around the 1000-acre fire. Backburns sometimes



The author's four-year-old son Tristen and an oak tree on their Riley-Thron property

burn hotter than the natural fires, and trap wildlife between the natural fire and the advancing backburn. The Forest Service will not disclose how much acreage they torched, but fire ecologists allege that backburns comprised more than half of the total fire acreage.

"The perverse incentives are there for the Forest Service to enlarge the burn: They also enlarge their budget and their opportunities to salvage log," says Anthony Ambrose of Citizens for Better Forestry.

While backburns sometimes stop the fire's advance, such methods are difficult to control, and are responsible for disasters such as the Los Alamos fire.

When a wildfire is decreed a "State of Emergency," all environmental laws are suspended: bulldozers can plow into wilderness areas, firefighters can cut down ancient trees and helicopters can dump toxic chemicals into rivers and streams without any public accountability or environmental review.

The winter rains, not the Forest Service, finally put out the fire. When the smoke cleared, approximately 140,000 acres had burned, much of it in the Wilderness and adjacent pristine roadless areas that conservationists have long fought to preserve. The Forest Service spent more than \$100 million, leaving behind a 150-mile fireline, dozens of helicopter pads in the wilderness and tons of red fire retardant (some of which they later admitted contained cyanide). Other drainages were affected as well: Mill Creek, Red Cap Creek, Tish Tang Creek, and Horse Linto Creek, which are very large drainages, despite being called creeks.

Shasta-Trinity National Forest admits unapologetically, "Fire suppression activities...have altered the character of the wilderness. There are areas of unnatural stumps...Remote camps have large campfire rings and chainsaw camp furniture."

In November, smoke was still rising in wisps from the valleys when we saw tree fallers cutting down ancient trees that the Forest Service deemed hazardous to motorists along the little-traveled Denny Road. These trees weren't black. They weren't dead. But the law no longer applied, and there was no way to stop them.

As we traveled further along the road, we discovered, to our surprise and delight, that most of the 140,000 acres burned by the natural fires was still filled with green, living trees. In a "low severity burn", which often occurs in ancient forests, the majority of the trees survive.

Working like a giant broom, the flames had swept out decades of leaves, branches and brush, leaving a rich black ash that soaked in with the first rains, adding nutrients to the soil. As it has for thousands of years, the fire enhanced the area's great natural biodiversity by leaving a mosaic of live and dead trees on the steep mountainsides. When we show photographs of the burn to friends they say, "Oh no! Is this beautiful forest blackened now?" We reply, "No, that's the forest that's already burned!"

That December, the Forest Service told us that the forest is in "recovery" from this natural event, and that it needs their help. Animals won't survive, said the agency, in the ancient forests unless they are "thinned," "treated" and "managed for the forest's health." All the doubletalk meant one thing: cutting trees and selling them to the highest bidder. "I don't like to call it salvage anymore," said one Forest Service official "I call it 'fuels management.'"

According to Dr. Tim Ingalsbee, a fire ecologist with the Cascadia Fire Ecology Education Project, there is no published peer-reviewed study that documents any benefit of salvage logging for forest health. Many studies, however, do cite the damage salvage logging causes: destroyed soil, erosion and lost habitat.

By February, Doug and I were showing our slides and lecturing to the public. The Forest Service mailed out a plan to remove more "hazardous" trees along their little-traveled roads, then sent press releases denying they had proposed any salvage logging. At another public meeting, Forest Service employees told me that their fire ecologists were recommending cutting trees in the places where the fire burned hottest. Undoubtedly, big timber will push the Forest Service to log in the burn area as much as possible over the next decade. This is how the cycle works: When wildfires strike, the Forest Service is given free rein to appropriate taxpayer dollars, bogus scientific-speak is used to justify logging, and our forest ecosystems suffer. It's time to rein in the Forest Service and stop using fire as an excuse to sell our national heritage to the highest bidder.



The Riley-Thron homestead, tucked into the Trinity-Alps

For more information about protecting the burn area or about fire ecology conferences, write Karin or Doug Riley-Thron, New River Wild: PO Box 703; Arcata, CA

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Ed Begley Jr.
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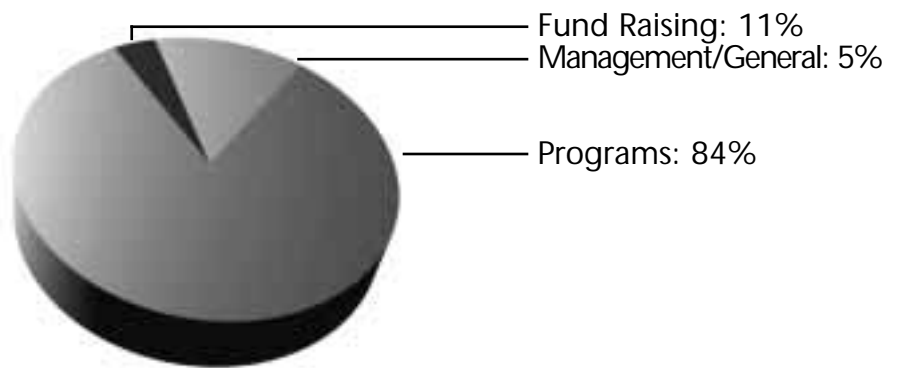
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