

Forest Voice

Defending Nature, Saving Life Since 1988

www.forestcouncil.org



OK Slip Falls, Adirondacks, NY. Logging approved by The Nature Conservancy. Photo: The Nature Conservancy, www.osiny.org/images/content/pagebuilder/20337.jpg

WHICH SIDE ARE THEY ON?

100 Years of Compromise or Treachery & Treason

Environmentalists have been losing for so long that they've come to believe that losing by smaller margins constitutes a victory. But attaining slight variations in the terms and conditions of our defeats is not the same as winning. Winning requires a net gain for the natural world.

Even that isn't fully accurate because it invites so many "trades" in which one unit of nature is sacrificed to save another. It's the classic "Sophie's Choice," condemn one child to death to preserve the life of the other. By any definition, that is not a moral choice. In that story, Sophie is forced to make it under Nazi threat of immediate death for both her children. What's our excuse?

What if we fought for every child, every acre, every tree, every stream? What if we refused to make morally and ethically reprehensible choices, and chose instead to stand by our professed values — to the death if necessary. I'd frankly rather die fighting to win than perpetuate the pretense that war on nature is actually peace because it was negotiated by Beltway Greens.

It has seldom been problematic for big corporate interests to get the endorsement of the mainstream environmental community. They simply dangle foundation grants, proffer direct and indirect contributions, propose partnerships, and offer the all-important "seat at the table." In return, Greens are expected to be reasonable and realistic. Thus, the Sierra Club climbs in bed with Clorox, and NRDC and Environmental Defense give their blessing to Texas Utility's three big, new and dirty coal burning power plants in Texas.

The irony is that Big Greens cut the legs out from under the grassroots, and then claim they are the only ones getting something done — in the same way the Nazi-friendly Vichy government believed it was doing something for France. While I think they're traitors, quislings, or collaborators (even if well meaning); like Benedict Arnold swollen with self importance, they end up betraying the very thing they swore to defend.

This is why Greens are so easily divided and conquered: There is always someone willing to deal. This is why every year we lose more and more of the Earth's priceless and irreplaceable life-support systems, without the people ever being told, let alone understanding what is being lost, and what the consequences will be for them. We have no unified voice, no resonating message. What we do have are deal makers.

The Greens are represented by a handful of alpha organizations, each intent on building its individual fiefdom, each anxious to "save" something here, even if it's at the cost of losing far more over there. We urgently



need a unified bottom line; a point beyond which we will not be pushed; clear limits on what is appropriate to sacrifice. But we don't have it. I defy anyone to identify what Greens actually stand for. We stand for nothing immutable; and when we do take a stand, it isn't for long. Every bad deal in the last 50 years has been blessed by one or more environmental organizations. And it's getting worse, not better.

History is not kind to collaborators, and if the planet continues on its current path of decline, I shudder to think what it will say of us. To paraphrase David Brower: Compromise may be necessary, but it ought not originate with our local or national conservation and environmental groups.

* * *

In this issue we have invited essays from a broadly diverse group of authors which offer their important perspectives on compromise and collaboration. **Rick Gorman** has important current experience and viewpoints about the Sierra Club's dirty deal with Clorox. To further clarify concerns with one of the nation's largest environmental organizations, **Monica Evans**, former chairperson of the executive committee of a Michigan Sierra Club group, provides her perspectives and the ultimate moral actions of the committee. **George Wuerthner**, among the nation's foremost authorities on forest fire issues and public land grazing, offers a scholarly, detailed essay on environmental collaboration and the associated fraudulent assumptions embedded within. An environmental scholar and author, **Victor Rozek**, offers his 20-year perspective on compromise and the tragic history of public forest destruction. **Josh Schlossberg** expresses a forthright viewpoint on compromise and the effect on public forests and grassroots environmental actions. **Simon Counsell**, director of the Rainforest Foundation UK, provides a firsthand appraisal of the failure of the Forestry Stewardship Council to protect forests. **Bill Barton**, a knowledgeable Oregon private forestland owner, offers his experiences and critique of collaboration, Stewardship Authorities and the deceptions within them. **Jeff St.Clair** and **Joshua Frank** assail the Big Greens, compromise and provide a final hope for a new environmentalism ethic. A frontline activist heroically fighting wholesale aerial forest spraying of harmful herbicides and pesticides, **Day Owen**, describes the effects on his family and community and the continuing actions of the Pitchfork Rebellion. In our final essay, **Karen Coulter**, a 30-year activist and environmental leader in Eastern Oregon, describes her career and its many transitions. Her wisdom and insight concerning corporate power, environmental organizations, and her recent participation in a collaborative group in Grant County, provide important perspective.

—Tim Hermach, President

"When fascism comes to America, it will not be in brown and black shirts. It will not be with jack-boots. It will be Nike sneakers and Smiley shirts ... Germany lost the Second World War. Fascism won it. Believe me, my friend."

—George Carlin

Forest Voice

© 1988-2008
ISSN 1069-2002
Native Forest Council
PO Box 2190
Eugene, OR 97402
541.688.2600
Fax 541.461.2156
info@forestcouncil.org
www.forestcouncil.org

Forest Voice is sent free to members of the Native Forest Council. The cost of U.S. membership is \$35 annually. Bulk orders of the *Forest Voice* are available for \$50 per 100. A complimentary copy is available on request.

All rights to publication of articles appearing in *Forest Voice* are reserved.

Publisher/Executive Editor
Tim Hermach

Managing Editor
Jim Flynn

Associate Editor
Josh Schlossberg

Special Thanks
David Porter
Funk/Levis & Associates:
Chris Berner, David Funk
Marriner Orum
Sarah Wiltz
Charlotte Talberth
Marcia Hanscom
Deborah Ortuno

No Thanks
All those who feel it's OK to cut deals that leave us with less native forests, soil, air, and clean water.

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 or send an email to tim@forestcouncil.org.

Inspired? Incensed? Impressed?
Please write:
Native Forest Council
PO Box 2190
Eugene, OR 97402

Cover Photo:
OK Slip Falls, NY, highest waterfall in the Adirondack mountains, recently purchased by the Nature Conservancy in a deal that would protect half of a 161,000-acre parcel of forest — while allowing the rest to be logged for at least the next 20 years.

This publication contains copyrighted material the use of which may not be specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in our efforts to advance understanding of environmental, political, human rights, economic, democracy, scientific, and social justice issues, etc. We believe this constitutes a "fair use" of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the U.S. Copyright Law. In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, the material in this publication is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for research and educational purposes. For more information, go to www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml.

Native Forest Council & Forest Voice Turn 20!!!

We're celebrating 20 years this year, looking back on where we've been and looking forward to the next 20 years.

We're also looking for your feedback on the content and quality of our one-of-a-kind newspaper, the *Forest Voice*. In particular:

- In what way has the *Forest Voice* educated you over the years?
- Did any particular articles teach you something new? Enrage you? Give you hope? Cause you to act in defense of our forests?
- Any pictures that just blew you away, from a stunning forestscape to a heart-wrenching clearcut?
- What features in the paper would you like to see more of? Less of?

We'll publish some of the responses in future issues, and use the feedback to make your *Forest Voice* newspaper more of what you want to see. (Send to PO Box 2190, Eugene, OR 97402 or info@forestcouncil.org.)

Thanks to all our supporters for staying true to your principles and supporting the Native Forest Council and the *Forest Voice* through the years!



Native Forest Council

The Native Forest Council is a nonprofit, tax-deductible organization founded by business and professional people alarmed by the wanton destruction of our national forests. We believe a sound economy and a sound environment must not be incompatible and that current public-land management practices are probably catastrophic to both.

The mission of the Native Forest Council is to protect and preserve every acre of publicly owned land in the United States.

Board of Directors

Allan Branscomb
Calvin Hecocata
Tim Hermach

Advisory Board

Ed Begley, Jr.
Jeff DeBonis
Larry Deckman
Erika Finstad
David Funk
Rev. James Parks Morton
Fraser Shilling
Ed Dorsch

President

Timothy Hermach

Staff

Bill Barton
Rachel Barton-Russell
Monica Morrison
Josh Schlossberg

Interns

Claire Kouba
Javier Magallanes
Naomi Rowden

Volunteers

John Borowski
Michelle D'Amico
Rick Gorman
Michael Lang
Jeanie Mykland
Steve Northway
David Peltier
Michael Riegert
Johnny VanHerwaarden

Forester

Roy Keene

Seattle Office

206.783.0728
seattleinfo@forestcouncil.org
David Divilbiss
Suzanne Pardee

Eugene Canvass

Jeremy Vallianos

Seattle Canvass

Ilira Walker

Regional Representatives

Margaret Hays Young
Brooklyn, NY
718.789.0038
718.789.8157 fax

Wayne Norton
Gainesville, FL
352.373.8733

Jason Tamblin
Duluth, GA
770.851.4181

Kris Moorman
Ames, IA
515.232.1316

Linda Marina
Burlington, VT
802.540.0196

Printed on 100% Post-Consumer Recycled Paper with Soy-based Ink



News and Views

Canada Likely to Label Plastic Toxic

The Canadian government is ready to declare as toxic a chemical widely used in plastics for baby bottles, beverage and food containers as well as linings in food cans. The compound, called bisphenol-a, or BPA, is used in Nalgene® brand bottles. The company is phasing out the use of BPA. Canada would be the first country to make a health finding against BPA.

\$1-Billion Timber Slush Fund or Fair Trade Deal?

The deal had its roots in the Bush administration's decision six years ago to slap tariffs on Canadian lumber. The administration contended that Canadian timber companies were selling their wood in the U.S. at unfairly low prices. Over the next five years, the tariffs collected and held by the U.S. grew to more than \$5 billion. The Canadians fought back in U.S. and international courts, winning most of the decisions in a drawn-out process. The U.S. lost before NAFTA panels, and two rulings by the U.S. Court of International Trade. But despite the largely favorable rulings, the Canadians were being starved into submission by the continuing U.S. tariffs. And with Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government seeking a closer relationship with the Bush administration, the Canadians finally agreed to a U.S. proposal: We'll stop fighting you in court and send you back the \$5 billion, if you wire \$1 billion back across the border to U.S. timber industry and timber-friendly groups, including one hastily organized entity dominated by timber industry insiders.

Google Earth Showed Protesters Way to Conquer Parliament

Demonstrators revealed that they had used Google Earth to plot their protest on the roof of the Houses of Parliament in April against the expansion of Heathrow Airport. The website, which allows users to zoom in on satellite photographs of Earth, "showed us all the walkways, steps and other details we needed to make our way across the roof from the door to the far side where the public could see us," said one of the protesters. Another protester described how they were able to map out the interior of the Palace of Westminster without raising suspicions. "We sent in a reconnaissance group who simply wandered around till they found the route to the roof ending in an open door." They managed to recruit a young Commons insider who, thanks to having a security pass, was able to carry the banners, handcuffs (bought from a Soho sex shop) and other equipment past the body scanners and X-ray machines that are supposed to protect the buildings.

Democrats to Offer Offshore Oil Drilling

On August 16 House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said that when the U.S. Congress returns in September, Democrats will offer legislation that could give oil companies drilling access to more offshore areas. By moving to open additional federal waters to energy exploration, Democrats could narrow the differences they have with Republicans on tackling America's energy problems, a concern that ranks high with voters heading into the November presidential and congressional elections. Barack Obama has changed his position and said he would be willing to consider new offshore drilling if it allowed comprehensive energy legislation to pass. John McCain, also switched his position and has called for opening most U.S. waters to drilling if the affected states agree.

White House Attacks Environmental Rules

In August the administration unveiled a regulatory overhaul of the Endangered Species Act that undercuts the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Under current ESA procedures, the Fish and Wildlife Service gets to review plans by federal agencies that could affect imperiled animals and plants. For most federal projects, including dams and power plants, decisions on possible impacts to wildlife would be made by the federal agencies charged with building dams and power projects. That largely ensures that no impacts will be found, which apparently is the point. Although administration officials are touting this change as a way to free up the Fish and Wildlife Service to focus on the most critically endangered species, there are other ways to accomplish such a goal.

Get ready for other midnight surprises. The clock is ticking on Bush's presidency, and it's only 11 p.m.



Mangrove Removal Left Burma Exposed

Destruction of mangrove forests in Burma left coastal areas exposed to the devastating force of this year's cyclone, a top politician suggests. ASEAN secretary-general Surin Pitsuwan said coastal developments had resulted in mangroves, which act as a natural defence against storms, being lost. At least 22,000 people died in the disaster. A study of the 2004 Asian tsunami found that areas near healthy mangroves suffered less damage and fewer deaths. Mr. Surin, speaking at a high-level meeting of the Association of South-East Asian Nations in Singapore, said the combination of more people living in coastal areas and the loss of mangroves had exacerbated the tragedy.

Letters

Re: NFC's Spring Forest Voice - Hot off the presses!

Feel free to quote me: I love distributing the *Forest Voice* in Portland. It's the clearest written account of what's going on in our forests.

Thanks for the opportunity to do good and spread the word about what's really happening in our forests.

—Albert Kaufman
Portland, Oregon

Letter to the Editor:

Tim Hermach's "The Second American Revolution" editorial (Winter 2008) was right on the mark. The corruption, intransigence, denial of reality and outright ignorance by our policymakers are heading us and the only planet we have in the wrong direction. Yes, reason and science must overcome fear and superstition/blind faith. Appointed heads of government agencies, whether incompetent or wrong-headed, must be replaced; that, however, will only happen when George W. Bush and Dick Cheney are removed by the Congress moving ahead with Articles of Impeachment, starting with H. Res. 333 (Kucinich) for Dick Cheney. We dare not wait for the November 4 election which might be "postponed," if Bush orders an attack on Iran.

—John Saemann
Eugene, Oregon



Hold the Environmental Movement Accountable

Professional sports fans accept nothing less than 110% from every last player on their team. Over the years, when a baseball team threw a game or a prize fighter took a bribe to take a dive, the response from fans was always been the same: outrage and fury.

With such high standards for recreational sporting events, one would hope the same standard would apply to those we entrust to maintain the planet that gives us life. Yet, incredibly, among paid professionals in the mainstream environmental movement, it's become almost common practice to set the bar so low that protecting a small slice of "rocks and ice" wilderness now constitutes a "victory," no matter how much has been sacrificed in the process.

We believe it's high time to hold those professional "environmentalists" to even higher ethical standards than professional athletes who play games for a living. While it's rarely pleasant to expose the

unsavory actions of misguided conservationists, in the long run it's the only way we can encourage those well-funded groups to fight for real protection and life on Earth and to build a united movement.

There's a reason our corporate adversaries win and why we don't. Industry has clarity of purpose, fanatical commitment and unwavering standards. Many in the "environmental movement" do not. That must change. Here's where we need your help:

As you read these words, consider yourself officially deputized by the *Forest Voice* as an investigative journalist to dig up dirt on what green groups are doing to sell out Nature in your area. If you're currently a dues-paying member of that organization, so much the better. We encourage you to investigate "accomplishments" to find out what was given up in order to chalk up these self-professed "victories," which are then "sold" as services to funders. Let us know what you uncover by con-

tacting us at 541-688-2600; PO Box 2190, Eugene, OR 97402 or info@forestcouncil.org, and — if it's accurate... and sufficiently damning — we'll cover it in the *Forest Voice*.

On the other side of the coin, we're also looking for profiles of groups holding the hard line by advocating for genuine protection of Nature. This will hopefully begin a long conversation regarding who is doing good — and who is not.

This is less about "naming and shaming" than it is about encouraging wayward greens to actually do the job they're paid to do. With your assistance, we can build a united movement that demands accountability from those who are supposed to be protecting the Earth for future generations. We need to insist that every self-described "environmentalist" advocate without compromise for the good of Nature and the life — human and non-human — that depends on it for survival.

As Contexts Change, So Do Solutions

by Victor Rozek

I believe that in civilized society compromise is both useful and necessary; but not under all conditions, and not in every circumstance. Compromise is contextual: locating a freeway, establishing funding priorities, developing a plan for downtown renewal; these are proper issues for negotiation. But such issues as the Bill of Rights, the lives of our children, the safety of our food supply, and the health of the planet are not matters that invite concession.

The very reason we have laws and a constitution is that we believe there are values too precious to sacrifice; lines that should not be crossed; behaviors that ought not be tolerated.

In the current incarnation of the forest management debate, there are again strong voices urging compromise. But public forests have suffered hugely from over a century of compromises, and there are compelling reasons why compromise remains an inappropriate remedy for the financial woes of Oregon counties.

First, the probability of an agreement actually succeeding must be weighed in a historic context. If the past teaches us anything, it is that a compromise will work as long as the timber industry wants it to work or until they successfully sponsor another environmentally hostile administration. Today, the industry will take what it can get; tomorrow its lobbyists will demand more. They won't stop until they get it all because they are in the "get it all" business.

And let's quit pretending that any forest plan is an agreement negotiated by equals. Despite its lamentations, the timber industry controlled federal forests for many decades. It cut unsustainably and replanted disastrously (dense monocultures susceptible to fire and insects). Through its political cronies, it engineered midnight riders to up the cut and legal exemptions to bypass environmental laws. In return for lavish contributions, Republican administrations have staffed the Department of Agriculture and the Forest Service with former timber industry executives whose goal is to maximize extraction. Over the years, under the guise of forest health, or fire prevention, or salvage, or thinning, the cut continued. Meanwhile, the best logs were exported as raw materials, providing virtually no value to local economies.

The game has been rigged for decades and now, by any measure, everything is worse than it was. The old growth is nearly gone; fisheries are dying; forests are sick. But whatever the malady, industry has a remedy and it's always the same: more logging. And why not? It's so heavily subsidized by tax dollars, it amounts to a huge transfer of wealth from the American public to the timber industry.

For years we have played Charlie Brown to the industry's Lucy. Again and again we were told to trust and kick the football. Each time we were assured, it would be different. And each time it wasn't. You

have to ask yourself: When do we quit playing Charlie Brown and simply refuse to kick the ball?

When the Eugene *Register-Guard* editorializes that "disputes over federal forests don't always have to be resolved in courtrooms" (Lost art of compromise 6/03/08), it misses the point. Of course they do, because in a civilized society that is how one combats what Judge William Dwyer accurately described as "systematic and deliberate" violations of law. The question is: can any compromise with the timber industry be trusted? And the answer based on decades of experience is, no.

Second (and more important), is that this latest round of compromise is based on the fallacy that any plan at this juncture can—as the *Register-Guard* suggests in its 6/26/08 editorial (Promising forest plans...) "provide sustainable logging, spare old growth, help rural communities, and restore federal forests."

There simply is no magic-bullet plan that will provide all things for all people. That ship sailed decades ago when the forests were relatively healthy, old growth was comparatively abundant, and the planet was not heating up like a hot plate. The timber industry spent decades gorging on old growth without thought of consequence, while counties binged on federal tax dollars. In doing so, they both set the inevitable course of their own decline.

The issue now spills over into inviolate territory such as the wellbeing of our children and the health of the planet. The Earth needs every tree it can get. It is incredibly short-sighted to keep cutting trees, releasing vast amounts of carbon, and helping the climate get hotter faster until one day in the not so distant future glaciers melt, rivers dry up in summer, and the remaining forests wither, unable to adapt to the rapid changes. Only the salvage loggers will rejoice.

In a time when it seems as if half the country is on fire, the other half is under water, when the arctic is melting and hurricanes are increasing in frequency and ferocity, the timber industry's answer, as always, is don't worry, keep logging.

The message is getting louder and the message is this: The Earth is a host unconcerned with the survival of its guests. It is governed by a living set of laws that have operated for billions of years irrespective of the willingness of inhabitants to abide by them. It is a system that favors no single life form. It is, in a fundamental sense, indifferent to our, or any other, presence. Keep messing with the life support system and we may not like the consequences.

The choices left to us now are either to extract a short-term gain for the few, at the expense of long-



Private industrial forestland clearcut south of Reedsport, Oregon

term suffering for the many; or, to endure short-term discomfort, for a potentially huge long-term benefit for all. Communities can adapt; the Earth can only react.

It was clever linking county tax revenues to logging levels; it ensured perpetual support for the maximum cut. But if tax revenues are the issue, we could begin by closing all the tax breaks enjoyed by Big Timber and other corporations operating within our state. In the mid-'70s, corporations paid 18.5 percent of Oregon's income taxes. This year that percentage is predicted to drop to 5.3 percent. Guess who makes up the difference?

Eleven years ago, Steve Duin of the *Oregonian* reported that tax exemptions for the timber industry alone totaled \$582 million for the biennium. Imagine, if rural counties had access to those tax dollars all along, we wouldn't be talking about the possibility of Curry and Josephine counties filing for dissolution! It's a measure of the corrosive influence of money in politics, that asking corporations to pay their fair share is not even on the table. The corporate lackeys in Salem would rather cut services or raise taxes for working people, before daring to ask their patrons to give up preferential treatment.

If a county's survival is dependent on leveling more forest land, it needs to rethink its survival strategy. Logging companies are notorious for cutting and moving on, and the promise of jobs is highly overrated: ask yourself, have you ever seen a prosperous logging community? Simply stated, the timber industry is to forests and rural communities what the coal industry is to mountains and Appalachia.

Where forests are concerned, compromise is the equivalent of death by a thousand cuts. Prescribing logging as a remedy for decades of ills caused by logging is like prescribing alcohol for cirrhosis of the liver. Nature will heal itself, given enough time. We can help it, and ourselves, by planting trees, not cutting them. Regardless, we simply should not compromise with corporations that have a history of breaking or circumventing the law. We shouldn't compromise the welfare of our children or the health of the planet. The people who want to stop public land logging are not the enemy. Short-term thinking is the enemy, and any compromise that offers yet another "Sophie's Choice" should be rejected.

Victor Rozek is a former editor of the *Forest Voice*.

Collaboration Failure

by Bill Barton

Recently, there has been a lot of attention focused on using the collaborative process to deal with forest management issues. Administrative mandates handed down from the executive branch have instructed federal agencies to work more closely with local “stakeholders,” the goal being to find ways to care for public lands without triggering the litigation that has been prevalent due to agency mismanagement and prolonged harvest at levels well above those that could be called sustainable.

On initial examination this seems like a good idea. It could bring local interests to the table to work in partnership with the federal agencies, cooperatively form plans, and begin an era of “collaborative conservation” that serves the forests and the local economy. Unfortunately, these processes are just another extraction scheme that robs the American public of assets and quality of life while enriching a few wealthy corporations and stockholders.

One way this has been implemented is under the relatively new “Stewardship Authorities” (SAs). The SAs have been hyped as a tool to promote “restoration” of our over-cut and mono-cropped national forests. There are many collaborative stewardship projects currently underway on the public forests of our nation. These range from small, local “restoration” projects to a huge, 10-year, open-volume contract encompassing 150,000 acres.

The SAs consist of two pages of rules that allow for several unconventional processes to be used in the management of natural resources overseen by the BLM and the Forest Service. The SAs are presented to the public as “restoration” based. In reality the stated purpose of the SAs is to “to perform services to achieve land management goals for the national forests that meet local and rural community needs.” It is clearly stated in the forest plans that “land management goals” on our national forests means industrial logging.

The following is a list of the unconventional tools contained within the SAs:

- The SAs allow for the receipts generated by the sales to be retained on the forest where they are sold. This means that trees are being cut, and there is no return of value to the U.S. treasury, states or counties.
- The cost of setting up these sales cannot be taken from the retained receipts. This means that the American taxpayer is paying the bill for the administration of these sales.
- Retained receipts cannot be used to monitor the projects. This means if any monitoring of the projects does take place by the managing agency, the cost falls on the taxpayer. Again, the privatization of public assets. However, the receipts can be used to monitor the “process” to make sure the “process” is working.
- Sales are being sold as “end result” sales. They are trading “goods for services.” There is no marking of trees or scaling/grading of the volume of wood being removed. The contracts specify the condition the land shall be left in. The logger chooses which trees are to be left, and the volume of the sales is being estimated on a per-acre basis. Many of the logs are being sold by estimated tonnage and fetch a weigh-log price. Much of the wood ends up at veneer plants and lumber mills. The value of the wood at these destinations is much higher than what is paid for weigh-logs. The public is never compensated for any of the value of these trees.
- The SAs allow for open-ended, unmonitored contracts to be let for a period of up to 10 years. The managing agency can sell as many of these contracts as they want.
- So called “Best Value” contracting allows less than full and competitive bidding on the contracts. It allows the managing agency to award sales with little or no advertising or bidding. Preference is given to repeat contractors.

I have been participating (as intervener, trying to stop the lies) in a fledgling “stewardship group” being set up in the McKenzie River watershed in west central Oregon. The first meeting I attended was in October 2007. That meeting was a tightly

choreographed event featuring a hired facilitator from Resource Innovations.

I felt concerned immediately when I realized that the room was full of government employees from various agencies and members of non-governmental organizations. Almost no one represented the public at large. Further research has shown that an inner circle of agency, industry and “environmental” organizations are controlling the process. This collaborative cabal has effectively monopolized the control of your public forests, and they are not restoring anything. It is all profit-driven extraction, the privatization of public assets.

Using the SAs, 25 million board feet of timber has been logged off the Siuslaw National Forest in Oregon. This has generated \$1.7-million dollars in retained receipts that have been spent on “restoration” projects. Much of the money has been spent on private property outside the national forest boundary to “forward watershed restoration goals.” We, the public and the owners of the trees, have paid all the cost of laying out the sales, selling the timber, and, of course, we contributed the trees.

The “facilitator” painted a very positive picture of the process, noting how effective it had been at stopping litigation and “bringing people together.” He spoke appreciatively of the “success” of the stewardship collaboration on the Siuslaw. I do not agree with his assessment of success. The areas that have been logged are more fire-prone and will ultimately contain less wood.

The claim was made that the few meters of recovered stream and trees planted in a farmer’s field offsets the logging of millions of board feet of trees. There was no discussion of the costs to the taxpayers, the damage to the forest, or the profits made by the timber barons who have found a new way to get the public to enrich them. Making it worse, “green” logging groups, calling themselves conservation organizations are instrumental in validating the process. Locally, Oregon Wild, Bark, the Cascadia Wildlands Project, and others are actively participating in this latest extraction scheme. In addition, the local watershed councils are taking money from the timber companies responsible for the damage they are trying to mitigate. Numbed into accepting “political reality,” they willingly compromise and participate with the timber industry and governmental organizations to increase the liquidation of public assets just to have a seat at the table and a piece of the paltry retained receipts that are thrown to them, like a bone to a dog. They also receive generous funding from corporate trusts and foundations for their participation in these groups.

All of this is done under the guise of “restoration.” The Forest Service claims the logging is being done to “restore” the forest. However, they refuse to define restoration. What they are really doing is mitigating damage from the mismanagement they have been practicing for years. On the McKenzie, over 90% of the volume being logged in the proposed sales will be logged as “heavy thinning.” What heavy thinning has to do with restoration has not been clearly stated. In their scathing rebuke of the BLM’s Western Oregon Plan Revisions, a team of scientists state that: “Strong scientific support for the assumption that managed young stands can develop some or all of the characteristics of existing old-growth forest has not yet been developed, although much management in the Pacific Northwest is predicated on this hypothesis.” Yet they continue to thin these stands, claiming that the solution to too much logging is more logging.

Oregon’s congressional delegation is trying to codify the process. Sen. Ron Wyden and Rep. Peter Defazio are both working on legislation that would mandate using “collaborative forestry” on the forests of the Northwest. Both proposals call for a sharp spike in logging volume. Pro-industry inner



Stewardship logging in the Siuslaw National Forest in Oregon

circle groups would act as advisors to the managing agencies to validate and remove accountability from the agencies as they continue the destruction of the forests that give us our life.

In this climate of endless compromise, environmental half truths, and out and out lies, our forests are reeling under the cumulative impact of a century of overcutting and mismanagement. Based on industry sponsored lies, scientifically fraudulent “fuels reduction” and “restoration thinning” projects are continuing to kill our public lands. Our salmon populations have plummeted to the point that there is no commercial season this year off the coast of Oregon and California. Landslides and debris flows carve away at the precious soil. Our water quality continues to decline. Flooded streams caused by rapid runoff from thinned and clearcut areas have caused devastating flooding in Oregon and Washington. Yet they keep cutting.

Outrageously, the perpetrators are being supported by the environmental “collaborators” who should oppose them. What gives these NGOs the right to compromise away your trees? They say if you leave the “right” trees, then you can log the rest. How can any “environmental” group say “these” trees are important and “those” are not? Over 90% of our ancient forests are gone and unless we protect the “baby old growth,” there will never be any to replace them.

The “collaborative forestry” being practiced in the forests of the U.S. amounts to the continuing subsidized removal of public assets for the financial gain of logging corporations and sold out “green” groups. The shift to “restoration” forestry is simply shiny new lipstick on the same old pigs. Our forests are dying to enrich a few timber barons, appease the green washers, and justify the jobs of the bureaucrats who administer your public lands. We cannot afford to support these parasites any longer. Our planetary ecosystems are failing. Find out where your dollars are going. Does your favorite environmental organization support collaborative forestry?

End Note: After many months of work by the “Stewardship Group” on the McKenzie, no definition of restoration was ever brought to the group and the proposed stewardship sales on the McKenzie Ranger District of the Willamette National Forest have been cancelled. District Ranger Mary Allison said it was because of market conditions. The trees will still be sold, even in a bad market, but the restoration work will not be done.

So much for restoration as a driver for collaborative forest management.

Bill Barton was born and raised in Lane County, Oregon. He trained in Geology at the University of Oregon and worked in mineral exploration, logging, building and as a restoration contractor. Currently he is the Field Operations Director for the Native Forest Council.

A Bias for Life: The Role of the Environmentalist

by Josh Schlossberg

After decades of speaking on Nature's behalf, the environmental movement continues to gain power and influence in the U.S. With media, government and even big business preaching the green gospel all of a sudden, modern day enviros might finally have an opportunity to start reversing the course of Earth-death, rather than just "slowing down the rate at which things have been getting worse."

In these days of climate change awareness, industry and government just can't get away with completely ignoring environmentalists anymore. Though cynics may disagree, America seems to actually be listening to what treehuggers have to say for a change. Other than a few dinosaur neo-cons, even politicians aren't calling environmentalists a threat to the economy anymore.

Does that mean "ecotopia" is just around the corner? Well, despite bi-monthly Gang Green (Sierra Club, NRDC, Wilderness Society, etc.) mailers claiming victory is just a \$35-membership away, the battle is far from over and our enemies have a few new tricks up their sleeves.

Big Industry has given up its 20th century tactics of demonizing enviros for a whole new strategy. Why should industry play the villain when it can green up its image by hand-picking the conservation groups asking the least and give them fat foundation grants, a seat at the bargaining table, and all the (corporate-owned) media money can buy. Once in a while, Industry throws them a bone—like postponing drilling the Arctic Refuge or setting aside a minuscule "rocks and ice" wilderness area on unloggable land. All that's asked in return is a promise from the enviro-lites not to challenge the root cause of nearly every environmental problem: corporate rule—leaving genuine solutions like real campaign finance reform, ending corporate tax subsidies, stopping private land clearcutting, or canceling the federal timber sale program off the table.

For a perfect specimen of corporate-funded environmentalism look no further than Pew Charitable Trusts, a \$5-billion foundation/organization founded by the children of Joseph N. Pew, CEO of Sun Oil Company (Sunoco), which has made tens of millions of dollars worth of grants to middle-of-the-road environmental groups. An environmental foundation backed by Big Oil money? Does that mean the Pew family one day just turned over a new green leaf? Or are entities such as Pew nothing more than Big Oil's strategy to create their own weak "enemies" by propping up the moderates?

Shades of Green

Even a beginning gardener can tell a healthy plant from a sick one by the color of its leaves: dark green meaning health and strength, yellow betraying a deficiency and weakness. But it's much trickier to figure out the shade of an environmentalist. While the color of a person's skin tells you nothing about their character, in the environmental movement your shade of green, deep green or yellow-green, means almost everything.

The whole spectrum of the green rainbow, from the Audubon Society to Earth First!, accepts that the planet is sick, but there's a surprising difference of opinion as to just how sick. For example: the remaining native forests, the lungs of the Earth. It's reasonable to say that logging hurts the forest like smoking cigarettes hurts human lungs. Yellows would be satisfied with cutting back from, say, five "packs" a day to half a "pack." Deep Greens know that with less than 5% of the nation's lungs left pumping in CO₂ and pumping out O₂, that even a few "cigarettes" a day—anything short of cold turkey, really—could mean total collapse.

Then there are the Yellows who are actually afraid of making the necessary structural changes—overthrow of corporate dominion and the relocation of economies—or at least don't want to be held responsible if any of these scary new things were to come about. It'd be funny if it weren't so pathetic: environmentalists lay awake nights agonizing over the loss of old-growth logging jobs... as if Henry Ford worried about his public relations when he put the horse-drawn buggy industry out of business.

What it comes down to is just a different way of looking at what it means to be an environmentalist.



Brower School of Thought

David Brower (1912-2000) was one of the most respected environmental leaders of the 20th century, dubbed "the archdruid" of the environmental movement by some, the reincarnation of John Muir by others. As Sierra Club executive director from 1952-1969, Brower helped increase its membership by 1,000%, which, ironically, didn't stop the board of directors from eventually forcing him out for his increasing radicalism.

Brower didn't think himself radical enough, blaming himself for letting the Bureau of Reclamation dam the fabled Glen Canyon so the Sierra Club could stop two other dams from being built. After committing what he believed to be a sin, Brower took a long hard look at what it meant to be an environmentalist. From Brower's book "Let the Mountains Talk, Let the Rivers Run:"

"Compromise is often necessary, but it ought not to originate with environmental leaders. Our role is to hold fast to what we believe is right, to fight for it, to find allies, and to adduce all possible arguments for our cause. If we cannot find enough vigor in us or our friends to win, then let someone else propose the compromise, which we must then work hard to coax our way. We thus become a nucleus around which activists can build and function."

This Brower school of thought — take a stand and fight till you win — caught on, spawning such entities as the John Muir Sierrans, the End Commercial Logging campaign, the National Forest Protection Alliance, Save America's Forests, Native Forest Council's ZeroCut campaign and dozens more.

When you look at the economics of public lands logging, Brower's "no compromise" position seems the only option. With the federal timber sale program, the American people probably lose \$1,000 worth of forest benefits (clean air, pure water, fertile topsoil, carbon storage, climate control, fish and wildlife) for every \$1 the timber industry makes selling the trees. But since the Forest Service and BLM don't do any form of natural resource inventory accounting—calculating the true costs of private industry logging the public's forests—the American people are kept in the dark, and we keep liquidating our last wild lands.

While mainstream Greens celebrate Brower's legacy in so many words, they routinely ignore his most important lessons by making concession after concession to industry. While the "carrot and stick" approach (reward industry as much as you punish them) may have its merits, greens tend to overestimate the appeal of their measly carrot. When pesticides were banned from public lands because of a 1983 Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides lawsuit, it was the stick—not the carrot—that won the day. Now that the environmental movement has finally won public support and political clout through the use of its stick, it's in a hurry to replace the stick with two carrots!

The end result of "stickless" advocacy? How about 2006's Sierra Club, Greenpeace, Forest Ethics and Rainforest Action Network compromise of B.C.'s Great Bear Rainforest, the last intact temperate rainforest in the world and one of its greatest carbon stores? While these groups' fundraising letters and grant applications say they "saved" the Great Bear, what they've actually done is rubber-stamped the destruction of 25 million acres of native forest, 2/3 of the entire Great Bear.

Then there's Sierra Club's recent endorsement of Clorox cleaning products, in a supposed attempt to get the corporate giant to go green. By putting their logo on Clorox products, Sierra Club effectively dropped its stick, slapped on a coat of greenwash, and gave Clorox free rein to keep making some of the most toxic chemicals known to humankind.

Both cases show that greens can't outmaneuver highly paid industry personnel trained to attack environmental groups' Achilles Heel: the need for a "victory" to sell their funders and members.

Anyone seriously interested in fighting for the Earth would do well to heed the words of abolitionist Frederick Douglas: "Power concedes nothing without a demand."

Thinvironmentalism

The juiciest bone of contention among forest defenders is the issue of forest "thinning." Despite the benign sounding name, thinning still does much of the same damage as clearcutting, including: landscape-wide tree removal, soil compaction from heavy machinery, and erosion and siltation of waterways from road construction and use, not to mention the impacts on wildlife.

Green groups pushing for thinning in both native forests and tree plantations on public lands, thinvironmentalists, believe they can somehow convince industry to shift operations into this barely profitable, labor-intensive (though plenty destructive) model, in the name of "restoration." Even if the science on forest restoration through chainsaw surgery was unanimous—it's not—to expect a rape-and-run logging industry to transition into a benevolent presence in our public forests is pure fantasy.

Still, thinvironmentalists insist they've tamed the Timber Beast, ignoring past experience that shows that when you let the Timber Beast into the forest—for any reason at all—it's going to mark its territory in a big way.

What's the function of an environmentalist but an attorney for the Earth, an ecosystem advocate? A forest can't speak for itself, so the job of greens is to argue for their client's best interest. The forest wouldn't ask for a kinder, gentler form of logging; it would say "Get the hell out now!" Like a successful attorney, environmentalists aren't supposed to be objective, but to have a clear bias: in

this case, a bias for life. Deep greens understand that anything less than a complete chainsaw acquittal means a death sentence for our public forests. Yellow enviros will jump at any chance to “settle,” especially since it’s the only way to guarantee their paycheck.

Predictably, yellows will say any big changes are long-shots and to be really “effective” you can’t aim so high. Which is why Yellows would rather work to increase streamside buffers by a few feet than even mention returning to the public domain tens of millions of land grant acres sold from railroad companies to private logging companies, like Weyerhaeuser, Boise Cascade and Plum Creek.

Let’s not forget that it’s also the role of enviros to kindle the imagination and inspire citizen involvement and action. A winning movement needs a cry to rally around, like: “No Compromise in Defense of Mother Earth!” or “Not Another Black Stick!” Good luck trying to jolt the American people out of their apathy with the slogan: “Save the old growth—well, at least trees over 200 years old—and sometimes you can thin them and, of course they’ll build a few roads, but don’t worry, they’re just temporary...!”

While thinenvironmentalist lawsuits continue to delay, reform or even cancel some logging sales, their message is getting harder and harder to tell apart from the Forest Service, as both would:

- thin native forests for “fuels” and “fire risk;”
- open tree plantations—future forests—to permanent logging;
- put off the removal of nearly 400,000 miles of sediment-dumping, water-fouling logging roads; and
- ignore the true costs of drinking water pollution, disappearing salmon runs, carbon emissions and landslides when allowing private corporations to cut public trees.

Is this just a battle between the “realists” and the “idealists” and a waste of our time? Or is this the only chance greens have for redemption? If greens had united a decade ago on the common goal of ending the federal timber sale program, do you think there’d be such a thing as public land logging in the 21st century? I guess we’ll never know what our union can gain as long as the green scabs keep crossing the picket line.

Green Government

Yellows/thinenvironmentalists/mainstream greens seem to be less interested in letting nature reclaim the forests than in making technical fixes to the way the current corporate land management system is run. And as it happens, there’s already a role for these folks: it’s called agency staff. The purpose of government agencies such as the Forest Service and BLM is to mediate between a profit-driven logging industry and the needs of nature and those who depend on nature for survival. If Sierra Club CEO Carl Pope doesn’t want to end public land logging, maybe he should run for a more suitable post: chief of the Forest Service! While Pope makes a lousy forest defender, he’d probably be the best thing to happen to the Forest Service since Gifford Pinchott!

In fact, all mainstream environmentalists should be encouraged to make use of their skills at maintaining favorable PR, schmoozing with politicians, and accommodating the timber industry by infiltrating the ranks of the Forest Service, the EPA, state boards of forestry, etc. That way they can do what



Incense cedar, Marble Mountain Wilderness, California

they’re best at and what they clearly enjoy doing — finding common ground, aka: compromising — and the environmental movement can be left to those with the vision, determination and guts to replace our culture of death with one of life.

Josh Schlossberg is the associate editor for the Forest Voice, communications coordinator for the Native Forest Council, and co-director of Cascadia’s Ecosystem Advocates (www.eco-advocates.org).

The Dangers of Collaboration: Environmentalists Risk Undercutting Their Mission

by Erica Rosenberg

Christian Science Monitor, January 29, 2008

There’s nothing wrong with a group of people historically at odds sitting down to find common ground. Or is there?

For decades, America’s public lands have been a battleground: Timber, wildlife, recreation, wilderness — which interests and uses should dominate? But now, “collaboration” is all the rage. In collaboration, diverse stakeholders — environmentalists, developers, off-roaders, timber companies, county officials — hash out an agreement on how to manage their local public lands and then submit it to Congress for approval.

A few deals already have been enacted, and another halfdozen are in the works. Collaboration has been touted as the solution to “gridlock” on our national forests. Timber companies and their allies gripe that the normal process — extensive analysis, citizen involvement, and the right to challenge agency decisions — has ground all “management activity” (read: logging) to a halt. Western counties surrounded by public land argue that they need room to expand. Others believe lands worthy of protection are still threatened. The new paradigm means everyone sits down with their adversaries. But these collaborations are troublesome, particularly for environmentalists, who risk undermining their mission as well as the very laws that are the basis of their power, effectiveness, and legitimacy.

For example, a bill poised for introduction in Congress would turn into law an agreement reached by one collaborative group on how to manage Montana’s 3.3-million-acre Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest.

The stakeholders had one thing in common: They hated the management plan proposed by the Forest Service. So they came up with their own plan specifying which areas can be logged, which can be opened to off-roaders, and

which should be recommended to Congress for wilderness designation.

Sounds reasonable enough. So what’s wrong? To start, as owners of the public lands, all Americans have a stake in their management and they have not designated these representatives. Even the most inclusive collaboration can go bad: Outliers who pose a threat to consensus are either not invited or made to feel unwelcome. And, ultimately, decisions are being made behind closed doors. But Congress loves a done deal. With a local sponsor, Congress is inclined to rubber-stamp these initiatives, overlooking that they are an end run around the suite of laws that safeguard public lands and keep land-management decisions an open process.

The Beaverhead bill, for example, triples the acreage where logging can take place from what was in the Forest Service’s plan. It requires an environmental analysis only for individual logging projects rather than the plan as a whole, thereby waiving the bedrock US environmental law, the National Environmental Policy Act. It also allows logging in roadless areas — a radical departure from the Roadless Area Conservation Rule that environmentalists championed during the Clinton era. Other deals have sold off vast acreage of public lands in exchange for wilderness designations.

After years of being tarred as obstructionist ideologues, some environmental groups now have a seat at the negotiating table. Enjoying their newfound popularity, these self-appointed decisionmakers become heavily invested in reaching an accord, regardless of the science, the law, or the long-term effect on the land.

For decades, environmentalists fought to get a more level playing field and establish transparency and accountability in public-lands policy; they continue to fight the Bush administration’s relentless efforts to dismantle these policies. How ironic it would be, then, if in their eagerness to embrace the new paradigm, they craft and push through Congress deals that undercut the very laws that got them to the table in the first place.

Beaverhead Deerlodge Partnership:

by George Wuerthner

The sprawling 3.3-million-acre Beaverhead Deerlodge National Forest (BDNF) in Montana is one of the most spectacular pieces of public domain in America. It contains outstanding scenery, superlative fisheries, abundant wildlife, and unparalleled wildlands. The forest is high, dry, and generally unproductive in terms of timber production, which is one reason why the majority of its lands remain roadless. Of the total 3.3 million acres, 1.8 million are still essentially roadless, but only 220,000 are currently designated wilderness.

In an attempt to divvy up lands on the BDNF, the Montana Wilderness Association (MWA), National Wildlife Federation (NWF), and Trout Unlimited (TU) have reached a joint agreement with representatives of the timber industry and other interest groups working together as the “Beaverhead Deerlodge Partnership.” With the support of these conservation groups, their plan proposes logging up to 730,000 acres of the BDNF in exchange for timber industry support of 570,000 acres of new Wilderness areas.



The congressional designation of these wildlands forever putting them off limits to “forest management” and motorized access would be a significant achievement. However, it would come at a high cost. Not only is this proposal a tripling of logging over what the BDNF originally determined as suitable for timber cutting in its forest plan, but it also involves potential entry into 200,000 acres of roadless lands!

Though I disagree with the means of achieving potential protection for these wildlands, I do not for a minute doubt the commitment to wilderness of the individuals supporting this proposal.

Unfortunately, like the seamen of old lured to their death by the Sirens, they are, I believe, headed for a crash on the rocks. The lure of wilderness designation has blinded them to the many negatives in the proposal.

ORVs and Mountain Bikes Threaten Roadless Lands

One of the motivating factors to make a deal on the BDNF is the growing off road vehicles and mountain bike use that is carving out new trails and routes in lands formerly only accessible by foot or horse. The fear of many conservationists in the region is that expanding ORV and mountain bike use would create a political block that could derail future wilderness designation. There is no doubt that this threat is real.



As real as this threat is, I do not believe it justifies giving up a lot of roadless land, sustaining a dying timber industry, and logging our forests based on flawed ecological premises. Plus, much of this wheeled impact and threat will be reduced by the new forest travel management plan that will eliminate cross-country ORV travel and restrict thrillcraft and mountain bikes to designated routes (still way too much of the forest would be open to thrillcraft—but many of the proposed wildlands would be closed to their access).

False Premises

Putting aside the ORV and mountain bike issue for a moment, one of the biggest problems I have with the Partnership is its reliance upon false premises and the ecologically bankrupt paradigms of the timber industry to justify logging. Unfortunately, these conservation groups have adopted these paradigms and the pejorative language of the timber industry, including words such as “unhealthy” forests, “catastrophic” fires, and other terms that feed public misconceptions about our forests and associated natural processes like wildfire and periodic insect population increases.

Nearly all of the roadless lands proposed for wilderness in the agreement lies outside of what the Forest Service considers suitable timber. In other words, these are lands that the timber industry would never log anyway. Though the Forest Service is perfectly willing to log any lands it can get its hands upon, local groups like the Alliance for the Wild Rockies, Wild West Institute, Friends of the Bitterroot and others have been fairly successful in stopping logging plans. So while it is technically possible for logging to occur in these areas, the truth is that little logging is likely to occur there.

However, under the terms of the agreement, the timber industry would get access to more logs than they could legally log under the Forest Service plan, while giving up virtually nothing by supporting Wilderness designation.

What we are getting as protected Wilderness in this plan is essentially the highest, steepest, rocks-and-ice country like West Big Hole, while heavily forested roadless foothill areas with gentle terrain (read: good for logging) such as the West Pioneers have only a small core proposed as Wilderness.

Logging Justified on Flawed Assumptions

Flawed assumption number one is the assertion that forests of the BDNF have missed multiple fire cycles as a consequence of fire exclusion, and thus have unnatural accumulations of fuels that are responsible for large blazes. This is a common misconception in many parts of the West. While fire suppression, past logging, livestock grazing and/or climatic conditions have led to higher stand densities in some forest types than in the recent past, particularly in ponderosa pine stands, for most for-

est types the idea that forests are “out of balance” is inaccurate.

This is particularly true on the BDNF forests that are dominated by higher elevation forest types like lodgepole pine, subalpine fir, aspen, and other species that are naturally dominated by mixed to high intensity blazes that occur at long intervals. In other words, these forests don't burn frequently, but when they do, the fires tend to be large and intense. For the most part, even if fire suppression were always successful, which clearly it is not, the past 50 years or so of active fire suppression has not been long enough to significantly alter historic fire regimes in most of these forest types.

Some researchers now believe that fire intervals may have been longer than previously assumed, and that stand replacement blazes may not be unheard of in these forests. New insights into fire ecology suggest that few, if any, acres of the BDNF exist that are a significant departure from historic conditions. Therefore they may not be “unhealthy” and there is no problem that needs fixing, particularly by logging. At the least, one would want conservation groups to be raising this as a possibility rather than accepting the notion that logging is the way to cure a problem that may be more imaginary than real.

Drought and Wind—Not Fuel—Drive Large Blazes

The second flawed assumption is that fuel accumulations drive large blazes. Again the solution proposed by the timber industry (and supported by some of the conservation groups) is to reduce fuels by logging. Never mind that some of the largest fires in Montana in recent years have all occurred on lands that were heavily logged sites. Despite this contrary evidence that logging does not preclude large blazes, the Partnership continues to advocate logging as a means of reducing large blazes.

Rather than fuels, it is drought, wind, and low humidity that drive large fires. When these conditions prevail, large blazes are the natural outcome. An increasing number of fire ecologists are recognizing that climatic conditions are the driving force behind most large blazes we see today. Drought and higher temperatures are also the reason insect populations like mountain pine beetle have swelled in recent years.

If climate is the driving force in tree establishment and large blazes, this calls into question whether forests are truly out of balance and “unhealthy” as the timber industry would have you believe. In fact, large fires, insect outbreaks, and other changes that some are mistakenly characterizing as “unhealthy,” are really indicative of a healthy forest response to changing climate.

Also, the assumption that fuels are driving large blazes ignores the fact that we had plenty of big fires in the past, well before fire suppression had any influence. The huge 1910 Burn raced across more than three million acres of western Montana and northern Idaho, long before the Forest Service even thought about suppressing fires.

Thinning Does Not Stop Large Fires

This brings us to flawed assumption number three. There is a growing body of anecdotal and scientific evidence to suggest that thinning, or fuels management—by whatever euphemism logging is called—does not reduce the likelihood of large blazes. Again, this goes back to the fact that large blazes are primarily a consequence of climatic conditions. You can have a ton of fuels on the ground, but if you don't have the right conditions for a fire to spread, fuels don't matter; it won't burn.

On the other hand, if climatic conditions are severe, with extended drought, high temperatures, low humidity, and most importantly high winds, then fires will burn through all kinds of fuel loadings, including forests with very light fuels. Wildfires will roar through clearcuts, thinned forests, and even naturally thin forest stands with surprising vigor. We have seen many examples of this in recent years, including some of the larger blazes that burned in western Montana this summer.

A Defective Strategy

In fact, there is some evidence to suggest that thinning the forest can actually exacerbate fire spread and intensity. Remember that fires spread quickest and burn hottest under conditions of drought, wind, and high temperatures. When you thin the forest, you open it up to solar radiation, which dries out fuel, and increased temperatures result in additional heat stress on trees which respond with greater evaporative transpiration from needles and leaves, further drying soils and wood. Both of these factors increase flammability. Plus, thinning allows the wind to penetrate further into a stand so that even a 10-mph increase in wind speed can lead to a huge increase in fire spread, since wind increases fire spread exponentially. In addition, opening up the canopy by thinning increases available sunlight, and the reduced competition for nutrients spurs rapid growth of small trees and fine fuels like grasses, thereby increasing the relative flammability of the forest stand.

Big Fires Are Ecologically Important

The fundamental underlying flawed premise of the entire agreement is that big blazes are undesirable and something to prevent. In truth, most fires burn very little of the landscape. The vast majority of all burned area is the result of a very few, but very large fires. If we did nothing, most fires would go out without burning a significant acreage. And it is a very, very tiny minority of fires—less than 1%—that burns 99% of the acres charred each year. These large blazes are unstoppable. They go out when climatic conditions become unfavorable for burning.

But this is the punch line: even if it were possible to eliminate large blazes from the landscape, it would be undesirable. Large blazes do the bulk of ecological work and provide the majority of ecological services attributed to wildfire.

Logging — By Any Name—Is Not Benign

The fourth problem is that while conservation groups have adopted the deceptive language of the timber industry, using “Stewardship Logging” to mask what is nothing more than the same old logging with a new twist, they gloss over the many proven negative impacts that come with logging.

For instance, logging roads are major vectors for the spread of weeds. They are major sources of sedimentation. Logging equipment compacts soils, reducing infiltration of water, resulting in more surface runoff and erosion. Roads alter surface and subsurface water drainage patterns. Roads provide access to hunters and ORVs ensuring additional impacts and disturbance to wildlife. Logging removes woody debris (i.e. logs) from the forest



that results in a loss to wildlife habitat and nutrient cycling. Logging disturbance can negatively impact mollusks, ants and other invertebrates that are important to forest ecosystem function. And, of course, logging alters natural processes like wildfire and insect populations, which have proven positive benefits to the forest ecosystem.

In addition, logging will be concentrated in the most productive site—valley bottoms and lower elevations—and the most critical aquatic and wildlife habitats on the BDNF. Thus any logging and human intrusion has a disproportional impact on the biological integrity of the forest. By contrast, high-elevation subalpine forests and peaks that dominate most of the proposed wilderness areas are nice to look at, but they have less biological value than the lower-elevation areas.

Other Non-Intrusive Methods Ignored

The fifth problem with the agreement is that it immediately defaults to a very intrusive proposed action—namely logging—as its method of choice to reduce the threat of so called “catastrophic” fires to private property. Supporters conveniently ignore less intrusive alternative means of reducing fire risk such as prescribed burning or reducing house flammability.

Studies by Jack Cohen at the Missoula Fire Lab have shown that reducing house flammability is the most cost effective and, in fact, may be the only effective means of reducing fire risk. Retrofitting homes with metal roofs, removal of fine fuels from the proximity of homes, and other procedures can significantly increase the chances that any individual home will survive a blaze, even a crown fire.

Logging Not Important to Economy

The sixth faulty assertion made by Beaverhead Deerlodge Partnership is that logging is important to the regional economy, and that increased logging will have a positive economic impact on communities. Again, this is more wishful thinking and propaganda from the timber industry than truth. The most important values on the BDNF are fisheries, wildlife, scenery and wildlands. As University of Montana economist Tom Power and others have shown, the economy of western Montana is now and will be in the future driven by these amenity values, all of which will be degraded and compromised by logging.

Plus, all indicators suggest that the timber industry will continue to employ fewer and fewer people due to automation as well as a general decline in the industry—regardless of timber supply. The recent turn down in the housing market has also depressed timber prices to the lowest point in 25 years, further calling into question the assertion

that logging will be a viable corner of the regional economy.

Building an economic future based upon timber production, while degrading the very things that are truly valuable like wildlands and wildlife of the BDNF, is insanity.



Photos: George Wuerthner

Stewardship Logging is a Dangerous Euphemism

Like the Bush administration’s use of “Clear Skies Initiative” which is actually designed to promote dirty air, the new positive-sounding euphemism for logging bantered around is “Stewardship Contracts.” But like Clear Skies, stewardship logging is equally deceptive. Stewardship logging, or logging by any other name, is not benign. Stewardship contracts will direct all of the profits from logging back to the forest instead to the federal treasury. Proponents see this as a funding source for the forest, but it can easily be abused, since local forest officials will have a direct financial incentive to log. In a perverse way this may ultimately lead to even more logging as the Forest Service seeks to maximize financial returns by selling off more of the public forests.

ORV and Livestock Threats Ignored

Finally, the rhetoric on the Partnership’s web page supports ORV use on more than 1.6-million acres and leaves 2.2 million acres to snowmobiles, despite a litany of negative impacts that these machines cause to our collective natural heritage. The “partners” say nothing about the detrimental effects of livestock grazing, especially its impacts upon riparian areas and wetlands, all the while giving lip service about the need for restoring aquatic ecosystems.

Resource Advisory Council

Another long-term problem with the agreement is that it proposes the creation of a “Resource Advisory Council” (RAC) to be made up of industry, recreation, livestock and conservation interests to advise the agencies about how to spend money from logging receipts. Such a stacked deck ensures that RACs represent local economic interests. Keep in mind that conservationists chosen to serve on RACs are typically those known to be sympathetic to ranching, logging and other extractive industries. The dominance by extractive interests ensures that RACs are a vehicle of local control of public lands. Though these councils are technically only “advisory,” most federal employees know that they can only ignore the RAC at their peril.

More Wilderness Needed

Most of the U.S. is already developed, given over to human industry. Ninety percent of Montana is already roaded and developed. We are fighting over the last few scraps of relatively undeveloped landscapes. If we were to really have a genuine compromise we would be advocating the closure of all roads, termination of all logging, grazing, ORV use, and mining so that restoration of the entire BDNF back to wilderness-like conditions could occur.

Instead of pandering to local parochial cultural and economic interests, we need conservation groups that will fight for every last acre of wild country by promoting ecologically based comprehensive legislation like Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act, rather than promoting timber industry propaganda and building compromises based upon misinformation. The biggest compromises made by the Beaverhead Deerlodge Partnership have been truth, courage and the long-term public interest.

George Wuerthner is an ecologist, photographer, author, and a regular Forest Voice contributor. He is the author and/or editor of 34 books, including “Wild Fire: A Century of Failed Forest Policy and Montana Magnificent Wilderness.” He has personally visited 15 out of the 16 proposed wilderness areas in the draft agreement.

Sierra Club Makes Deal with the Devil

by Rick Gorman
Many Rivers Group Sierra Club

The Sierra Club has decided to endorse the Clorox Corporation by putting the Club's logo on Clorox's "Green Works" line. Personally I find it distasteful for an environmental organization to throw its support behind a chemical company, especially when most of that company's products are harmful to people and the environment. Many other chapter board members share this sentiment across the country.

If the Sierra Club really needs to put its stamp of approval on a corporate product, shouldn't it be on one that makes no toxic products, not merely a line of safe products among their multitude of harmful ones? I understand the Club's perceived logic of encouraging an historically "bad actor" to become environmentally responsible in order to give consumers the option to buy safe cleaning products. But, one problem with this line of reasoning is how many mindless consumers, upon hearing that Clorox has been endorsed by the country's largest environmental group, will buy unsafe

The timing of this partnership came at an inopportune time. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently fined the Oakland, California-based Clorox Company \$95,000 for allegedly distributing an unregistered and mislabeled Chinese version of Clorox Disinfectant Bleach, in violation of federal pesticide law. (See *article below*.) A 2004 report by the U.S. Public Interest Research Group Education Fund named the Clorox Company as one of the nation's most chemically dangerous. "The Company handles and/or transports hazardous substances, including but not limited to chlorine, at its plant sites, including the rail transit of liquid chlorine from its point of origin to our manufacturing facilities. A release of such chemicals, whether in transit or at our facilities, due to accident or an intentional act, could result in substantial liability." The Clorox Company is best known for its namesake chlorine bleach.

According to the Audubon Society, Chlorine is a powerful irritant and can be fatal upon inhalation. This toxic chemical causes the most household poisonings in the U.S., and ranks first in industrial injuries and deaths.



Clorox products because they didn't bother to read the label. Additionally, what message does this send to corporate America? No matter how much you pollute, if you stick one non-toxic product on the market some large, high profile environmental group may endorse you and enable you to engage in a greenwashing campaign.

This is yet another compromise by the Sierra Club board. In the face of dire environmental threats confronting this planet, incremental measures like the Clorox endorsement are no longer appropriate. This activity is tantamount to the Club endorsing Philip Morris, because they came out with a safe brand of cigarette while continuing to poison people with all their other brands, or Chevron for drilling responsibly somewhere in the world. No matter what the temptation, Sierra Club should not put its stamp of approval on any company that has not 100% cleaned up their act.

This is not the first time we've seen the sell out mentality at work in the Club. Adam Werbach, past president of the Sierra Club, became a consultant for Wal-Mart after comparing them in his book, "Act Now, Apologize Later," to a "virus, infecting and destroying American culture."

Sierra Club's budding up to big business is a major problem for many of the more "hardcore" members of the Club. There are many environmentally conscious smaller businesses out there that are much more deserving of Sierra Club's endorsement, but the Sierra Club has opted for "big ticket" endorsements. "If... we confine our support to companies which are, bluntly, too small to reach most American consumers, most American consumers will not change their buying behaviors. Only large firms can reach most Americans" said a spokesperson for the Club. If that is the case, then there must have been better large firms out there for the Club to team up with. If this was such a proper choice, then why according to postings on the Club's "Clubhouse" website, did the Club's Corporate Relations Committee examine the proposed deal with Clorox and reject it, before it was overridden by the national board of directors. And, why was the Club's Toxics Committee not consulted before the deal was signed?

There is growing evidence that chlorinated drinking water causes bladder cancer and rectal cancer. Many chlorinated water supplies probably contain some amount of THM (trihalomethanes), which are carcinogenic compounds.

Chlorine is used to produce polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastics, herbicides, pesticides, cleansers, and pharmaceuticals; to bleach pulp and paper; and to disinfect water. All told, it is a component in about 15,000 products that have combined estimated annual sales of \$71 billion. In spite of its prevalence, there is a movement to ban chlorine because it is suspected of causing a number of environmental problems, including ozone depletion. It is also thought to pose health threats to humans and wildlife, ranging from cancers to endocrine disruption.

According to the EPA, human health effects associated with breathing or otherwise consuming small amounts of chlorine over long periods of time are not known. They are currently under investigation. Some studies show that workers develop adverse effects from repeat inhalation exposure to chlorine. Laboratory studies show that repeat exposure to chlorine in air can adversely affect the immune system, the blood, the heart, and the respiratory system of animals. Chlorine, at low levels, causes environmental harm, and is especially harmful to organisms living in water and in soil.

An endorsement of a polluting corporation by any environmental group is inappropriate. When that endorsement comes from the nation's largest, oldest and most well known conservation group it is a sad comment on what can happen to a group that becomes too large and political. The Board of Sierra Club should follow the Club's Corporate Financial Acceptance Policy that says, in part, "The Club will not endorse products," and seriously reconsider its endorsement of the Clorox Corporation.

EPA Fines Clorox Over Pesticide Labeling

SAN FRANCISCO (04/09/2007) – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently filed a complaint seeking \$177,300 against The Clorox Company, an Oakland, Calif.-based manufacturer, for the alleged distribution of unregistered and mislabeled disinfectant bleach intended only for Asian export.

The EPA is seeking a penalty from The Clorox Company, located at 1221 Broadway for distributing export-only unregistered pesticides within the United States. In addition, the disinfectants contained Chinese and English labeling, without adequate directions for use and lacked the required statement: "Not Registered for Use in the United States of America."

"Companies must ensure that all pesticides meant solely for export do not enter into the U.S. market," said Enrique Manzanilla, the EPA's Community and Ecosystems Division director for the Pacific Southwest. "Selling or distributing

unregistered, mislabeled pesticides is a serious violation that can result in harm to public health and the environment."

Discrepancies identified in The Clorox Company's 2005 pesticide production report led EPA enforcement officials to conduct a detailed investigation that uncovered 38 violations of federal pesticide law.

The Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act requires companies that produce export-only unregistered pesticides, including disinfectants, to report that production annually. These unregistered pesticides must be clearly marked with the required labeling to prevent the products from inadvertently entering the U.S. market. These requirements protect public health and the environment by ensuring safe and effective handling, application, and disposal of pesticides, and by preventing false, misleading, or unverifiable product claims. The law also prohibits marketing of misbranded, improperly labeled, or adulterated pesticides.

For more information on pesticide regulation and enforcement, please go to <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/>.

To read this and other press releases on the EPA's website, go to <http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/071F82DCB3759E1A8852572B8007E44A7>.



Why We Quit the Sierra Club

by Monica Evans
Traverse Group Sierra Club

There's no way to whitewash, or greenwash as the case clearly is, the recent partnership of the Sierra Club and the Clorox Company. Wrong is wrong, and it is my deep belief that the Club's quiet decision to sell themselves to the Clorox Company is not only wrong, it's unconscionable.

When the Traverse (Michigan) Group of the Sierra Club's executive committee reached the decision to resign in protest over the deal back in May, we honestly had no idea of the media blitz it would create. We were simply standing up for our convictions and our whole-hearted belief that the Sierra Club has no business endorsing and making a "substantial" amount of money off a product produced by a company that the Club's own members and volunteers have worked tirelessly for decades to hold responsible for its negative environmental impacts on the planet. The idea that Sierra Club members should welcome the Clorox Company's decision to jump on the green bandwagon and make huge profits with their new "Green Works" household cleaning line, while continuing to sell its regular cleaning products which are both damaging to the environment and tested on animals, seems ludicrous. That the Sierra Club would sell its name and logo in order to claim a cut of the profits is outrageous and inconceivable. Does the new "green" line of products balance out the negative impacts of the Clorox Company's history? Our answer to that question was a resounding "no." We wanted no part of it. We believed that this is not what John Muir, the father of the Sierra Club, would have wanted either.

The fact that the deal was made so quietly, without the input from the Club's membership angered and bewildered us. That they wouldn't come clean, no pun intended, about what, exactly, the profits would be used for or what exactly the amount of those profits would be, perplexed us. Why all the secrecy if there is nothing to be ashamed of, if this was a deal to be proud of? Add to that the barrage of emails from Carl Pope and Robbie Cox after the deal was signed, informing us of their decision and trying to convince us of what a great thing this deal was, was condescending and insulting to our intelligence.

The Sierra Club is (supposed to be) a grassroots, non-profit organization, driven by the dedication and commitment of its volunteers who make the Sierra Club the most successful and influential environmental organization in the country. To come to an agreement with the Clorox Company without the input or approval of its membership gives light as to how far removed the national board is. With reportedly more than two dozen state chapters submitting resolutions to oppose the deal, the decision is clearly not one that would have been supported by Club members, had they been asked. The national Sierra Club had to know that the deal would be met with disbelief and dissatisfaction, if not outrage. Guess that's why it was done so secretively. One has to wonder what they were thinking would happen when the deal was finally brought to light

Although men are accused of not knowing their own weakness, yet perhaps few know their own strength. It is in men as in soils, where sometimes there is a vein of gold which the owner knows not of.
—Jonathan Swift

(obviously, the logical conclusion is they weren't). Did they expect that the Club's membership would simply fall in rank and just accept the deal without protest? Not our group.

And what responsibility do the state Sierra Club chapters hold in all of this? Why didn't they inform their state memberships of the deal? Are we expected to believe they didn't know about it well before the rest of us did? Or were they abetting the national board in their attempt to keep the deal quiet until it was over, thereby silencing the membership and trying to prevent the uproar they must have been expecting?

In 2000, when the Traverse Group reactivated after several years of dormancy, I was at a place in my life when I felt I could really dedicate myself to a worthy cause. The Sierra Club certainly felt worthy. I had financially supported the Club modestly for years. So when an issue came up at a state park campground in my native Leelanau County, it seemed like a good fit. The park was being threatened with development, and the Sierra Club was looking for people who cared enough to help stop it from happening. So I attended the first meeting, and out of that meeting came the reincarnation of the Traverse Group.

For those who may not understand the hierarchy of the Club, here's basically how it works: each state has a Sierra Club state chapter. Under the umbrella of that state chapter are the local groups, which in turn are run under the direction and activism of members within that particular group. Each group is largely responsible for the fundraising to keep itself afloat, receiving a quarterly allotment, based on membership, from the Sierra Club. At the time of

our resignation, our group's allocation amounted to less than \$500 a year. The Traverse Group covered a nine-county area in northern Michigan, and I served as chairperson for the duration of the eight years I was with the Club. I gave my heart and soul to the Club. I was proud to be a member of the Sierra Club, I was proud to be the chairperson of the Traverse Group, and I was extremely proud of the work we did.



During those eight years we joined the battle to help stop a coal-fired power plant in a nearby city. We protected one of the regions most beloved rivers and its valley from a bypass and bridge that would have devastated it. We worked hard to help elect a new, progressive, environmentally sensitive mayor and two city commissioners, urgently needed, for the city of Traverse City. We weighed in on dozens of environmental issues, from the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore's master plan, to the destruction of wetlands and wild, open spaces. We rejoiced in, and were proud of, each and every victory, both huge and small. Every victory was one worthy of celebrating (which we did, wholeheartedly).

Deciding to leave the Sierra Club and all we had accomplished was, in some ways, surprisingly easy. We are a group of six volunteers who have

a strong friendship and deep respect for each other. We are also, I like to think, six people with a clear sense of what is right and just. Personally, I knew I could no longer continue to give my time, energy and, as a day care provider, my hard-earned money to an organization that I felt had betrayed my trust and one that I felt is no longer deserving of my admiration or alliance. Their decision to move into the business of corporate profits speaks volumes of their disconnect with, and their disrespect of, their membership. I am totally disillusioned with the Sierra Club and saddened that it has decided to take the path it has. It seems utterly daft. I don't for one nanosecond regret or second-guess my decision to resign. The entire Traverse Group Executive Committee unanimously agreed that the only right thing to do was to resign.

As for the ex-executive committee of the Traverse Group of the Sierra Club, we have every intention of continuing to work together for the good of the environment. And to have a good time doing it. It just won't be with the Sierra Club. The outpouring of support and encouragement has been overwhelming. I am proud of our decision. I am proud of our steadfastness to stand up for what we so strongly feel to be right. And I am excited for the new possibilities and experiences that lie ahead.

Time will tell what impact their decision to become bedfellows with the Clorox Company will have on the Sierra Club. I feel one thing is for certain; it can't be worth the respect they have lost within their membership. And if it is, to them, then I am even more certain I made the right decision.



American Bald Eagle. Photo: William C. Gladish

Compromise in the Environmental Movement

by Karen Coulter

The Origins of a Radical

My origins as an activist didn't come from the environmental movement at all, but from a deep-seated knee jerk reaction of "not in my hills, you don't!" to the proposed deployment of the MX missile in Nevada and Utah. I grew up in a sterile new housing development in Reno, Nevada, in the '60s and early '70s where most neighbors never bothered to meet each other and those that did socialized in meaningless cocktail parties based on nuclear families and couples endlessly acquiring the latest useless electric gadget. The hills were my sanctuary; wildlife and natural patterns of weather and geology were refreshing and the source of meaning in my life: my bedrock. When I started resisting the MX missile's take-over of Nevada and Utah, I knew I would throw my body in front of the first bulldozer if it came to that. I was deeply astounded when we won that battle after lots of grassroots public education and organizing and eagerly leapt into a life of activism. I was a natural for becoming part of the Earth First! movement in my 20s as I was passionate, relatively antisocial but needing real community, deeply indebted to Wild Nature, and angry at the sell-outs of the big mainstream environmental organizations. "No compromise in defense of Mother Earth" made perfect sense to me.

colonialism through economic as well as military take-overs of other countries that don't go along with this dominant paradigm. Not recognizing this as the system creating our problems, a system of corporate governance transcending national sovereignty, makes activists and activist organizations largely reactive and reformist, content with band-aids instead of real solutions. Activists often become willing to turn a blind eye to the continued incremental destruction of everything worthwhile in order to be able to claim minor victories, and stay in accustomed tactical ruts rather than taking real risks to themselves and their sources of income by venturing into new, uncharted activist territory that might make more of a difference.

Getting Too Comfortable

It is all too easy, even when you start out as a radical, to get too comfortable fitting in with the norms of your new community, whether it is Earth First! or the Nature Conservancy, and not notice when tactics like treesits and banner hangs are no longer working or not noticing that you need to reach out and involve a broader segment of the public. It is all too easy to base your sense of self worth as an activist on a plan your organization devised some decade ago that no longer is meeting its own goals — if it ever really did. I am guilty of this over the last 17 years with the Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project in eastern Oregon. Although I am lauded

system designed to protect the private property rights of the wealthy minority and the interest of corporate capitalism in general. These interests include the logging and poisoning of national forests, the eradication of predators, the destruction of fragile high desert lands by livestock, and so forth. We do have some great environmental laws compared to other countries, and it's important to enforce them whenever possible to protect species on the brink of extinction, to protect biodiversity, ecological integrity, water quality, soil fertility and wilderness. However, it still must be recognized that we are only fighting brush fires with these battles and not getting to the source of the problems unless we are creating fundamental value change and our actions are building towards rewriting the rules of the society and government to support biocentrism, living within natural limits.

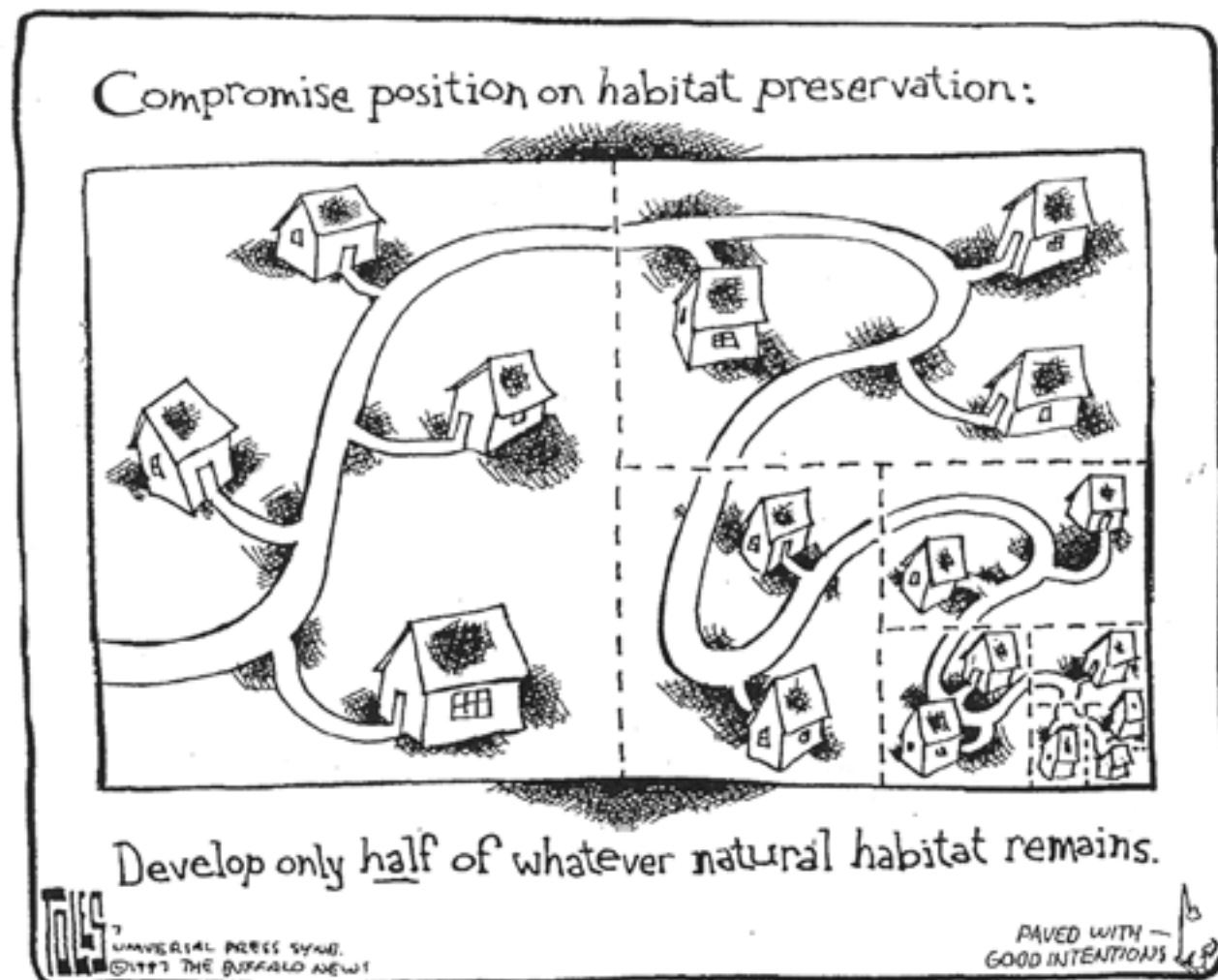
I've been doing POCLAD research and writing in the winters when my Forest Service work load slows down and designing most of my outreach to reflect our aim of changing the relationship between people and corporations so that people decide what corporations can and can't do as servants to the public interest rather than corporations dictating what people can and can't do. This work has been assuaging my guilt somewhat over a deficient forest protection strategy, but it is not enough.

I've also been trying to change Forest Service values, but the outcome is temporary at best, since it is a government agency marching to the orders of whatever government administration is currently in power. Too many environmental activists waste too much time on developing relationships with Forest Service or other agency officials only to be stabbed in the back, ignored due to overriding government policy, or co-opted by their own desire to please others and be accepted.

Collaboration: Trap or Opportunity?

It's important to always keep our most important goals and vision clearly in view. I sincerely hope I'm doing that with a collaborative group I've joined in Grant County, Oregon. To give some context, Grant County has been the most overtly right wing, reactionary and physically threatening county I've had to deal with as a forest activist in largely right wing, rural eastern Oregon. When, after many lawsuits, loggers and other community members of Grant County finally invited me to the table to discuss doing ecologically sound forest restoration that would provide some economic return to the community, I wasn't about to say no. However, that doesn't mean that I should abandon what I know to be the truths of ecological limits and of impacts of logging to soils, water quality, wildlife habitat and biodiversity. It also doesn't mean that I should forget about my organization's mission or goals. Yet polarization can only get you so far, whether the situation is an international territorial dispute or an effort to stop forest destruction. Ultimately if you are moving towards lasting change, that involves public value change. So my primary goal in working with this community is not the end result on the ground but the process of learning on both sides: their learning about the realities of forest ecology and what "ecologically sound restoration" means, and my discovering the social limits and opportunities for change at the juncture and hopefully cultivating lasting relationships with the community for working toward community and ecological stability. Such relationships must transcend the dictates of a central power capitalist structure that is not motivated by either the goal of healthy communities or that of flourishing natural ecosystems.

I think a cautionary approach needs to be taken with collaborative groups; they are instigated by the Forest Service, pushed by the timber industry and generally lead to logging. Not surprisingly, the Forest Service can be a major obstacle in the process, but there are signs of change on that front as they are systematically being defunded, which I see as potentially a good thing. They are confronted with the reality of very little mature forest being left after decades of overlogging. What I didn't anticipate as clearly was the situation of some environmentalists being my biggest source of stress and miscommunications.



U.S. Death Culture

Then, as now, 27 years later, I saw U.S. culture as being a Death Culture—as government promotion, and largely passive social acceptance of, the aggressive self-centered destruction of anything wild. The entire U.S. culture is based on the destruction of indigenous peoples and their way of living sustainably with the Earth, destroying meaningful social relations and real community, biodiversity, cultural diversity, and the fundamental ecological integrity supporting life on the planet. The U.S. can generate short-term profits for the wealthy minority and consume the Earth's natural bounty at a rate far surpassing that of any other culture in history.

Capitalism as a system of thought and action must be rejected as it is based on the endless exploitation of Nature and the majority of peoples' labor with no reference to finite limits of natural resources, the atmosphere, the oceans, the climate or ecological integrity and no respect for the profound values embedded in cultural diversity, biodiversity, self governance and peace.

Unfortunately, the majority of activists still don't seem to fully grasp how fundamental capitalism is to all our issue problems, or if they see it, they still don't attack the roots of the problem directly. Capitalism is the rule of the few over the many through its brainwashing consumerism and neo-

for having saved thousands of acres of forest from logging over four national forests, I haven't really saved them, as the Forest Service could always turn around and make them into timber sales again as soon as I'm sick or gone. That's a flaw in my strategy worthy of some serious self-examination.

I've also been too dependent on the organization and the work as my only source of income, linking my continued employment and lifestyle with that work continuing—a connection that all too often threatens the integrity of the work. We need to work toward our work as activists ending, not continuing, and fully develop ourselves as people.

Playing by the Rules with a Stacked Deck

My dissatisfaction with not getting at the corporate/capitalist roots of the forest destruction in eastern Oregon led to my involvement as an activist with the Program on Corporations, Law & Democracy (POCLAD), a strategic affinity group dedicated to engaging in public conversations and actions challenging the authority of corporations to govern us and working to build real radical Democracy: self-governance. The more deeply I got involved with POCLAD, the more I saw how my work with Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project failed to follow the strategy advice I was giving to other activists. Instead, I was playing by the rules in a stacked deck of the "Just Us" system, the legal

Fear of Fire

There is a lot of public fear of fire that has been carefully manipulated by government propaganda. Activists witnessing favorite old-growth groves and wilderness areas going up in smoke are just as susceptible to the fear of fire as anyone else. Fear is not a good basis for sound judgment with regard to war or forest protection or most anything else other than necessary primitive fight or flight reactions, like getting out of the way of a startled black bear in close proximity.

We need to learn from mistakes and do our utmost not to repeat them. For instance, worshipping and blindly following science has a solid track record of failure in the forest protection movement. Especially when the science has come out of old-school forestry schools and Forest Service funding. Obviously there are more credible scientists, and science has its place for guidance where there is a high level of scientific consensus, such as on the reality of global warming or the highly altered state of low-elevation pine sites in the arid West from past logging, fire suppression, livestock grazing, and dense replanting.

In the current project of the collaborative group I am involved with, we are dealing with a site the majority of which falls under high scientific and field observation consensus that it is highly altered from past logging, fire suppression and livestock grazing, with far too many small trees and not enough big, fire-resistant trees. This could lead to a stand-replacement fire or pine bark beetle epidemic taking out most of the remaining big trees unless some small diameter thinning and prescribed fire is used. The sticky point of course is the definition of "small diameter:" what is to be taken out, as ideally this project would also bring some economic benefit to the local community. What makes it easier for me to participate is a neutral outside facilitator, fairly comprehensive written guidelines for the project, the building of mutual respect, and the fact that this kind of project on this kind of site would not be a priority for us to stop anyway and would not be a likely winning lawsuit.

Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project is, and always has been, a "Zero Cut" organization, meaning, in our case, that we support an end to commercial logging on public lands, or as federal legislation proposed for this puts it, an end to all federal



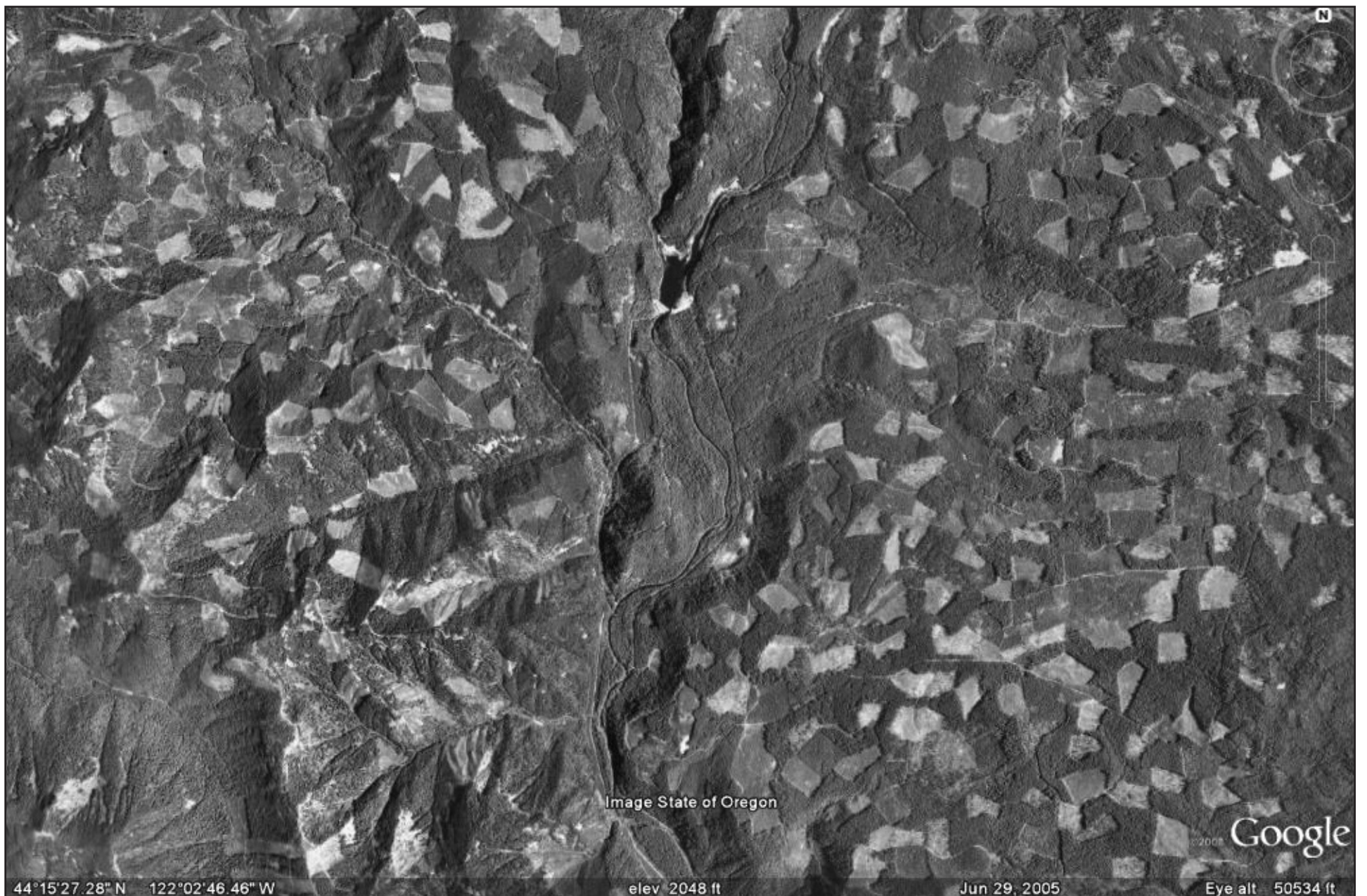
timber sale programs. All commercial incentive for extraction should be eliminated before we talk about what, if anything, can reasonably be removed from a site for local community use as part of truly ecologically sound restoration. Unfortunately we still haven't managed to pass any form of "Zero Cut" legislation, and I'm dealing with some pragmatic realities such as lack of adequate funding to litigate everything that needs to be stopped. There are some low elevation, already logged, pine areas where it may make more sense to thin small diameter trees to reduce stand replacement fire risk than to allow it to burn and contribute more to global warming. There is also an opening for building trust and real value change on the community level. But real Democracy is intrinsically a messy business.

A Precautionary Approach

Where the science is much weaker on what is natural and on whether small diameter thinning would actually reduce or increase fire risk, as in mid- and higher-elevation mixed conifer forests, I favor a far more conservative approach.

Global heating is the biggest environmental crisis facing us today. Slowing the rate of climate change and consequent species' extinctions and disruptions to ecological balance and social peace requires us to leave in place mature and old-growth forests, large logs and snags as carbon sequestration sinks. Yet we do risk losing this same forest to widespread fires that contribute significantly to global warming in low-elevation, dry pine forests that have been over-logged and fire suppressed. We need to be aware of such complex dynamics and adapt our response to changing circumstances even as we strive harder to paint an alternative vision for inspiration, awaken a passive society, nudge zombied Internet armchair warriors into the woods, and draw a line in the sand which we will not cross so as to protect the wild and defeat corporate rule.

Karen Coulter, a former field manager and campaign coordinator for Greenpeace Intl., lives in a yurt in Eastern Oregon. She is a board member of the League of Wilderness Defenders and the Program on Corporate Law and Democracy. Her "day job" is executive director of the Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project.



An aerial view of the McKenzie River watershed showing the patchwork of clearcuts and other forestry operations

Forest Stewardship Council: The Enron of Forestry?



FSC-certified plantation in Swaziland, South Africa, by Sappi, one of the world's largest forest plantation and pulp companies. Photo: Chris Lang

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an international nonprofit corporation, with offices in over 46 countries. Its stated purpose is “to promote the responsible management of the world’s forests.” It offers green certification on forest products.

Simon Counsell, director of the Rainforest Foundation UK, stated that the Forest Stewardship Council has created a “‘race to the bottom’ of certification standards,” alleging that the “FSC really has become the ‘Enron of forestry.’” Counsell, a founder member of the FSC, has been monitoring the organization since its creation in 1993. The problems with the FSC are not new says Counsell, “Not long into the FSC’s existence, we started to hear worrying reports... In some cases, certificates were being issued to companies that had a very poor environmental and social record. In 2000, we commissioned a series of local and international experts to investigate and write up a series of case studies about such problems from a number of countries. The results were alarming, and we realized that these were not just isolated cases of ‘bad’ certificates, but the result of systemic problems within the FSC.”

Counsell believes that many of the FSC’s drawbacks are due to its tendency to look at each individual logging operation as a separate entity while ignoring the big picture of what industrial logging is doing to rainforest ecology. “Whilst a



The operations of the state forestry company in Slovakia, which has had several of its regions certified. This illustrates one Counsell’s main points: this was certified by the Soil Association, but then lost its certificate because of poor management practices, but they then went to another certifier, SGS, and got re-certified. Photo: Maria Hudakova, WOLF/Friends of the Earth Slovakia

logging concession might appear to be ‘sustainable’ at this small-scale level, the whole development model that accompanies industrial logging concessions might be highly non-sustainable and destructive,” Counsell says. He continues with examples from the Amazon and Indonesia: “Research in the Amazon has shown that, over a period of years, commercial logging greatly increases the overall propensity of the forest to dry out, burn, and disappear. This happens regardless of whether the logged areas are certified or not. In Indonesia, local environmentalists and indigenous rights experts have long said that it is no use just certifying the odd “exemplar” logging company here and there, because the whole system of industrial logging concessions needs dismantling, and that most of the forest should be returned to its rightful owners, the indigenous communities.”



Kayapo tribesmen in Brazil. Photo: Simon Counsell

Another problem that Counsell sees as detrimental to the credibility of the FSC is their certification of products from “mixed sources,” which “allows up to 90% of the wood fibre in some FSC-labeled products to come from forests or plantations that are not actually FSC-certified, but are supposedly “controlled sources.” The truth is that these sources are not “controlled” at all, and hence many FSC products are likely to include material that is from illegal operations, or felling in High Conservation Value forests, or areas that are claimed by indigenous people. The Mixed Sources policy is allowing the laundering of unacceptable wood into the FSC system.”

Excepted from a Counsell interview with [mongabay.com](http://news.mongabay.com/2008/0417-hance_interview_counsell.html). For the rest of the interview, go to http://news.mongabay.com/2008/0417-hance_interview_counsell.html.

Time to Kick Out the Corporate Greens: Towards a New Environmental Movement

by Jeffrey St. Clair and Joshua Frank
CounterPunch, June 29, 2007

The environmental movement is on life support. Some would say it is already dead. Even though climate change and Al Gore are fast becoming the conversation du jour around the American dinner table, it also happens to be the rallying cry for do-gooder conservationists and corporations alike.

Call it the eco-economy. Virtually all major corporations now claim they are going “green.” Toyota dealerships cannot keep the hybrid Prius in stock. Apple, after heavy lobbying from Greenpeace and others, declares they are going to make their computers environmentally friendly. Genetically modified corn, which produces ethanol fuel, is being hawked by Monsanto as an alternative to petroleum based gasoline. Ethanol advocates are calling their program “Fuels for Profit,” while they sip McDonald’s organic coffee. The environmental movement has been corporatized.

Big green groups are not helping the situation. Their hands are tied by both the large foundations that pay their rent and the Democratic Party to which they are attached at the hip. They long ago gave up on challenging the system. Most groups today are little more than direct mailing outfits who have embraced a sordid neoliberal approach to saving the natural world. The true causes of planetary destruction are never mentioned. Industrial capitalism is not the problem, individuals are. Not the government’s inability to enforce its weak regulations. Not big oil companies, or coal fired plants. These neoliberal groups argue ordinary people are to blame for the impending environmental catastrophe, not those who profit from the Earth’s destruction.

Meanwhile, on the ground, grassroots environmentalists engaging in arson as a response to unfettered sprawl and our car addicted culture are dubbed terrorists by the federal government. Despite their extreme and counter-productive methods, the cases are quite informative. In our post-9/11 world

young eco-radicals are viewed by the FBI and corporations as if they are as dangerous as bin Laden. All activists, no matter their cause, should take heed. It is the first step in cracking down on radical activism.

Torching SUVs in the middle of the night, unfortunately, will not bring about any massive radical change, except, perhaps, in our “anti-terrorism” legislation. There are militant direct actions that are prevailing, however, from Paul Watson’s crusade to protect the wild creatures of the sea, to the environmentalists who stake out in trees for weeks at a time, to the grandmothers who chain themselves to logging trucks, despite the dangers.

Such actions, coupled with the organization of the working class, could help steer the environmental movement in the right direction. The philosophy of the great wilderness advocate Bob Marshall may prove to be quite prescient in the age of foundation driven conservationism. Marshall believed wilderness was for the regular folks. He believed wilderness was a “minority right” and argued that elitism inside the movement would be inherently corrupt. He’s right. The burdens of a corporatized society are great, not only for our forests and rivers, but to the workers who are consistently exploited and poisoned for profit.

Marshall believed the radical trade unions and socialized forestry was one answer to countering the destruction of the wild places he loved so much. Now is the time to once again embrace such an environmental ethic. Wilderness, that living symbol of freedom, exists for all to enjoy. It is not ours to exploit. The salmon and grizzly bears deserve better.

Jeffrey St. Clair is the author of “Been Brown So Long It Looked Like Green to Me: the Politics of Nature and Grand Theft Pentagon.” His newest book is “End Times: the Death of the Fourth Estate,” co-written with Alexander Cockburn.

Joshua Frank is co-editor of Dissident Voice and author of “Left Out! How Liberals Helped Reelect George W. Bush” (Common Courage Press, 2005), and along with Jeffrey St. Clair, editor of the recently published “Red State Rebels.”

Where Have All the Leaders Gone?

by Lee Iacocca

Lee Iacocca, the man who rescued Chrysler Corporation from its death throes, is now 82 years old and has a new book, “Where Have All the Leaders Gone?” While he talks mainly about the leadership of the U.S., many parallels can be found with the leadership of the environmental movement and the degraded state of our public lands. Here are some excerpts from the book:

“Had enough? Am I the only guy in this country who’s fed up with what’s happening? Where the hell is our outrage? We should be screaming bloody murder. We’ve got a gang of clueless bozos steering our ship of state right over a cliff, we’ve got corporate gangsters stealing us blind, and we can’t even clean up after a hurricane much less build a hybrid car. But instead of getting mad, everyone sits around and nods their heads when the politicians say, ‘Stay the course.’”

“Stay the course? You’ve got to be kidding. This is America, not the damned Titanic. I’ll give you a sound bite: ‘Throw the bums out!’”

“You might think I’m getting senile, that I’ve gone off my rocker, and maybe I have. But someone has to speak up. I hardly recognize this country anymore. The President of the United States is given a free pass to ignore the Constitution, tap our phones, and lead us to war on a pack of lies. Congress responds to record deficits by passing a huge tax cut for the wealthy (thanks, but I don’t need it)... While we’re fiddling in Iraq, the Middle East is burning and nobody seems to know what to do. And the press is waving pom-poms instead of asking hard questions. That’s not the promise of America my parents and yours traveled across the ocean for. I’ve had enough. How about you?”

“I’ll go a step further. You can’t call yourself a patriot if you’re not outraged. This is a fight I’m ready and willing to have.”

“My friends tell me to calm down. They say, ‘Lee, you’re eighty-two years old. Leave the rage to the young people.’ I’d love to as soon as I can pry them away from their iPods for five seconds and get them to pay attention. I’m going to speak up because it’s my patriotic duty.”

“So here’s where we stand... We’re immersed in a bloody war with no plan for winning and no plan for leaving. We’re running the biggest deficit in the history of the country. We’re losing the manufacturing edge to Asia, while our once-great companies are getting slaughtered by health care costs. Gas prices are skyrocketing, and nobody in power has a coherent energy policy. Our schools are in trouble. Our borders are like sieves. The middle class is being squeezed every which way!”

“These are times that cry out for leadership. But when you look around, you’ve got to ask: ‘Where have all the leaders gone?’”

“Where are the curious, creative communicators? Where are the people of character, courage, conviction, omnipotence, and common sense? I may be a sucker for alliteration, but I think you get the point.”



“Name me a government leader who can articulate a plan for paying down the debt, or solving the energy crisis, or managing the health care problem. The silence is deafening. But these are the crises that are eating away at our country and milking the middle class dry.”

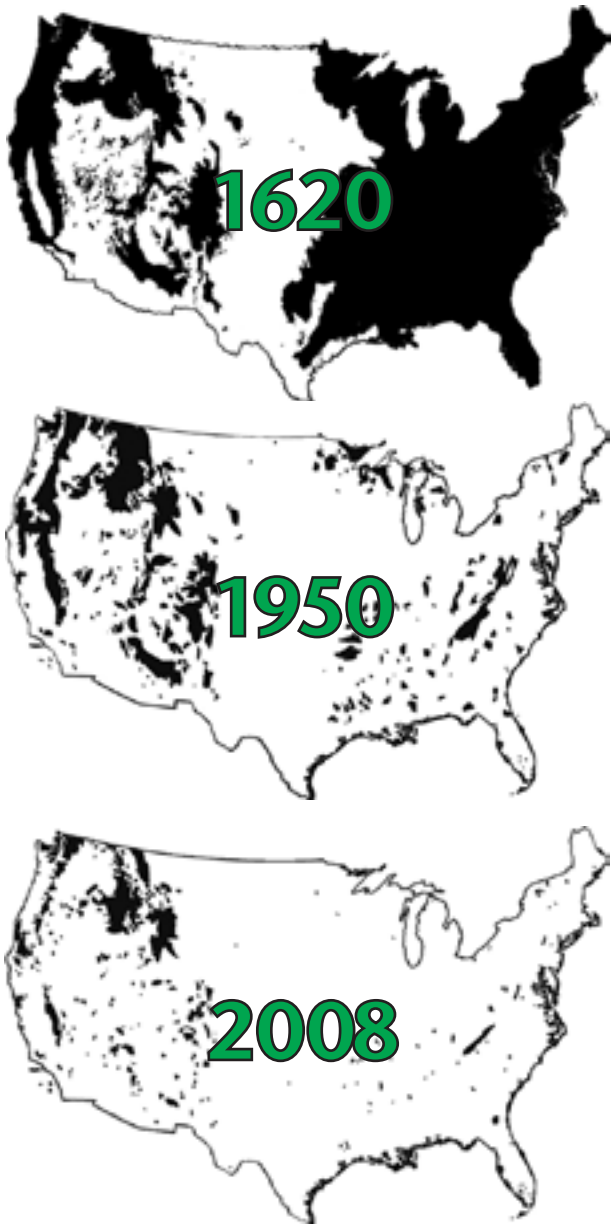
“I have news for the gang in Congress. We didn’t elect you to sit on your asses and do nothing and remain silent while our democracy is being hijacked and our greatness is being replaced with mediocrity. What is everybody so afraid of? That some bonehead on Fox News will call them a name? Give me a break. Why don’t you guys show some spine for a change?”

“Had enough? Hey, I’m not trying to be the voice of gloom and doom here. I’m trying to light a fire. I’m speaking out because I have hope! I believe in America.”

“In my lifetime I’ve had the privilege of living through some of America’s greatest moments. I’ve also experienced some of our worst crises: the Great Depression, World War II, the Korean War, the Kennedy Assassination, the Vietnam War, the 1970s oil crisis, and the struggles of recent years culminating with 9/11. If I’ve learned one thing, it’s this: ‘You don’t get anywhere by standing on the sidelines waiting for somebody else to take action.’ Whether it’s building a better car or building a better future for our children, we all have a role to play. That’s the challenge I’m raising in this book. It’s a call to ‘Action’ for people who, like me, believe in America. It’s not too late, but it’s getting pretty close. So let’s shake off the crap and go to work. Let’s tell ‘em all we’ve had ‘enough.’”

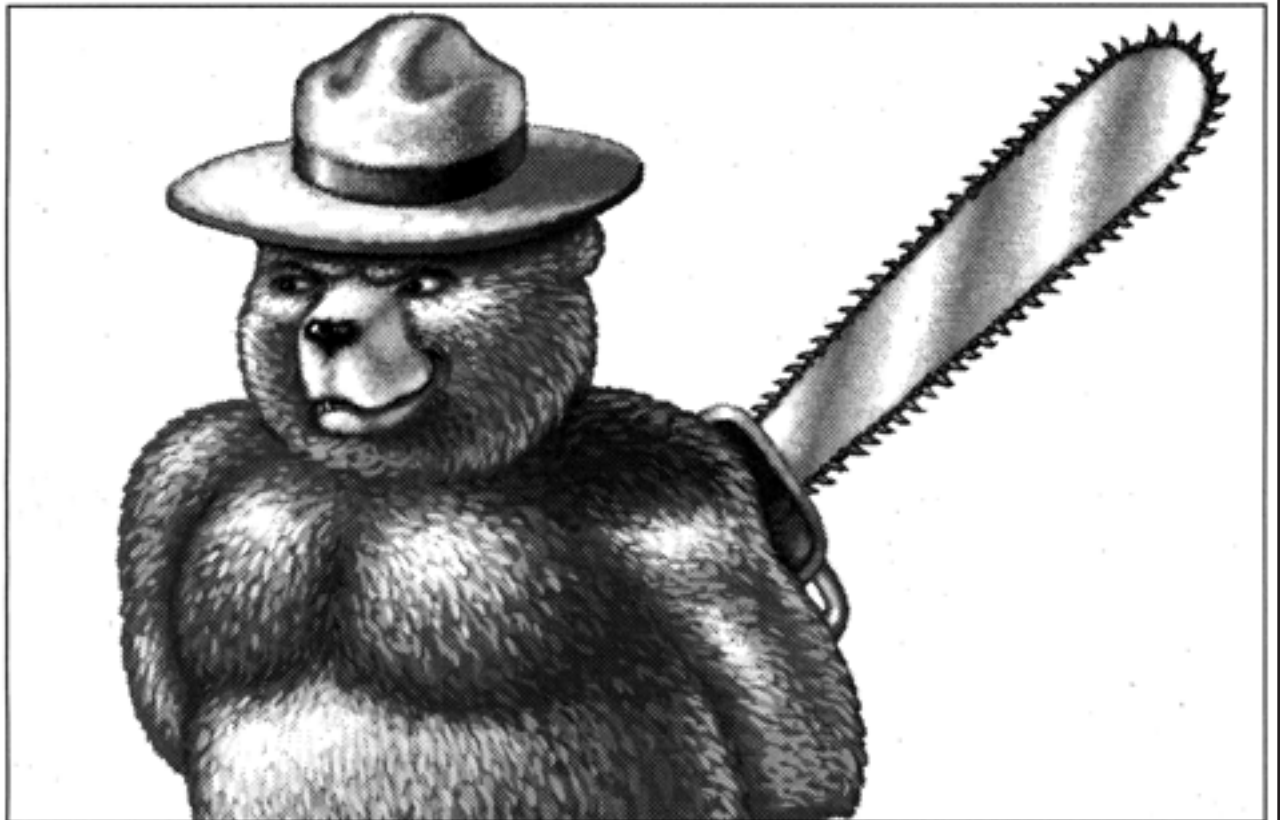
“It’s our country, folks; and it’s our future. Our future is at stake!”

Save Our Endangered Native Forests



A native forest is a self-regenerating forest that has never been cut or planted by humans.

There are “green” groups in the woods collaborating with the destroyers of nature.



graphic courtesy of Americans for Ancient Forests

Say it ain't so, Smokey.

YES!

I want to help save the last of America's wild lands and watersheds. Here's how to help:

Mail to:

Native Forest Council
PO Box 2190
Eugene, OR 97402
www.forestcouncil.org
info@forestcouncil.org

Sign me up!

- \$25 Student/Limited Income
- \$35 Advocate/Basic annual membership
- \$50 Supporter
- \$75 Contributor
- \$100 Conservator
- \$500 Sustainer
- \$ _____ David Brower Circle
- \$1,000 Patron
- \$5,000 Benefactor

- I'll pledge a monthly gift of \$ _____
 - Send me a monthly reminder
 - Bill my credit card
 - Please deduct my monthly gift from my checking account. I'm sending a signed and voided check. I understand deductions may be stopped or adjusted at any time.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

My check is enclosed.

Please bill my VISA

MasterCard Discover

Card number _____

Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Planned Giving

Native Forest Council offers a variety of planned giving opportunities. Gifts of stock, real estate and other assets may offer tremendous tax savings for you and provide the Council with a greater net gift. If you are interested in planned giving, contact the Native Forest Council at 541.688.2600.

Along with your tax-deductible contribution, please check one of the boxes below:

- I want to be a NFC member.
- I am already a NFC member.
- Please count me as a contributor.

I want to help get the word out. Please send a complimentary copy of the *Forest Voice* to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

I want to give a 1-year gift membership of \$35 to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____



Stay informed. Join the Native Forest Council and receive a free subscription to the *Forest Voice*!

The *Forest Voice* is filled with stories of the effort to save the last of our ancient forests. Less than 5% of these once vast forests remain, and they're being cut down at the rate of 185 acres per day. Trees that took 1,000 years to grow are destroyed in minutes. Each year enough of these trees to fill a convoy of log trucks 20,000 miles long are taken from Northwest forests alone! The informative *Forest Voice* will keep you up-to-date on the latest news and unmask the lies and greed of the timber industry in their multi-million dollar effort to cut the remaining ancient forests. Join now, and save the last of the ancient trees for our children.