

Battle Started Over Wenatchee Plan

Thanks to your efforts, the Okanogan Forest Supervisor received sacks of mail responding to deficiencies in the Draft Okanogan Forest Management Plan. That's the good news.

The bad news is that the terrific response on this first forest plan for the state may make it tougher for us on upcoming plans. We have, in effect, served notice on the timber industry, ORV groups, and other developers that we care enough about our Forests to fight for them.

Repercussions are already showing up for the recently released Draft Wenatchee Forest Plan. The timber industry, backed by big corporate dollars and several timber company associations, launched an aggressive campaign pushing for the maximum harvest alternatives in the Forest Plan. The industry is widely circulating a slick flyer calculating the collapse of local economies if every available tree isn't slated for logging by the Forest Plan. They have also developed a multi-media slide show which explains how maximum timber harvest stimulates the economy, enhances scenery, promotes tourism -- in fact, does just about everything but cure cancer.

Off-road-vehicle groups are also well organized on the Wenatchee Plan. The ORV alternative listed in the plan allocates just about every trail outside of designated Wilderness to ORV use.

Your letters on the Draft Wenatchee Plan will be especially important to counter these efforts to cut, road and open the entire Forest to motors. Wildlife, fisheries, old-growth, primitive recreation, water quality and other non-commodities need your

support. Please use this opportunity to tell the Forest Service how you want your favorite places managed, write to the Wenatchee Forest Supervisor before Oct. 1.

WASHINGTON WILDFIRE

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The Washington Wilderness Coalition is a non-profit, tax-exempt association of both organizations and individual members. The WWC provides assistance and information on Wilderness and Wild Rivers matters to its members and to Washington's citizens. The WWC is a publicly supported educational organization dependent upon private donations and citizen support. Contributions are tax-deductible.

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Washington Wildfire seeks manuscripts, black-and-white photographs, drawings, book reviews, poetry, etc. on Wilderness, Wild Rivers, and related conservation topics. Submissions should be sent to the WWC.

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Old Man's Beard (*geum triflorum*). Photo by Mark Egger



Chainsaws and Dirtbikes for the Wenatchee

Enjoy sitting on a stump while watching motorcycles roar past on a forest trail? If so, you'll be delighted with the Forest Service's "preferred alternative" (C) in the recently released draft Wenatchee Forest Plan!

Not surprisingly, the Forest Service chose a "business-as-usual" alternative. And that business means undeveloped areas scarred by roads and clearcuts, habitat for old-growth dependent species cut to minimum levels, increased sediments in fish spawning streams, and trail miles either lost under logging roads or given over to ORVs.

Specifically, alternative C would add 1700 miles of new roads to the 4700 miles of road currently on the Forest; 21,000 acres of old growth would be cut in the first decade; 51 miles of trails would be destroyed by logging and many more trail miles would be rerouted around clearcuts; 89 percent of the trails outside of Wilderness would be allocated to ORV use areas.

Over half of the remaining roadless acres would be roaded and logged. Designated Wilderness areas would be ringed by clearcuts -- 99 percent of the areas adjoining the Norse Peak, Goat Rocks and William O. Douglas Wilderness Areas are slated for development; logging would scar the hillsides along the Mather Memorial Parkway (Highway 410) marring this scenic entrance to the Mt. Rainier National Park.

Old growth habitat would be especially hard hit as roadless areas are opened up for development. Little will remain of the old growth Ponderosa Pine forests found in the dramatic sandstone canyons of Devil's Gulch; low elevation riparian forests along the primitive Chiwawa valley would be hauled away; and critical habitat for spotted owls and other old growth species would be destroyed in the Canyon Creek and Heather Lake Roadless Areas.

TIMBER — KEEPING THE CUT UP

Alternative C allows an annual timber harvest of 138.1 million board feet (mmbf). This level of harvest is 85 percent of the average amount actually sold on the Forest from 1974 thru 1984. These figures could lead the reviewer to believe the Forest Service

proposes a reduction of harvest levels. In fact, a good bit of the timber bought during these years was sold back to the Forest Service after the market went bust in the early 80's. Even after the buy-back sales the industry still owns an 850 mmbf backlog of timber that it has bought but not cut. **This is enough timber to keep mills running for the next five years.**

It is not merely by chance that the forests remaining roadless today have not yet fallen to the chainsaw. For the most part, these areas are uncut today because poor timber, steep slopes, fragile soils, short growing seasons, and difficult access rendered them unprofitable to log. The best lands have largely been cut over, and now the industry is asking us not only to allow them to devastate these environmentally sensitive lands, but in many cases to pay them for their efforts! On one recent Wenatchee sale taxpayers spent \$63,000 to subsidize logging within one mile of a nesting pair of spotted owls. In the Lake Creek roadless area the Forest Service did a site specific economic analysis in February, 1986, and determined that the agency would lose \$134,000 on roading and logging the area. Yet it is sacrificed for timber production in six of the nine alternatives presented in the draft *continued on page 3*



Forest Service economic analysis predicts the government will lose \$134,000 by roading and cutting the Lake Creek Basin. Photo by Doug Pauly.

