**Comment Now on Oregon’s new Logging Plan**

The State of Oregon is asking you for your comments on a new Forest Management Plan (FMP) for the Elliott State Forest. The new plan will allow Oregon to clearcut twice as much endangered species habitat every year, from 500 acres a year to about 1,000 acres a year, by clearcutting native, mature forests in Oregon’s coast range.

Email comments soon to: ODFStateForestsComments@odf.state.or.us. Also copy your letter to Governor Kitzhaber since he will have the final say (see addresses below).

The Elliott State Forest is currently managed under a Habitat Management Plan (HCP) that Oregon agreed to in 1995. At that time, there were 69 owls that depended on the Elliott for their living. The US Fish and Wildlife Service gave Oregon permission to “take” (aka kill) 43 of those owls because Oregon promised to protect the remaining 26 owls for the next 60 years.

Since then, the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) has logged some of the best owl habitat on the Elliott, taking all of those 43 owls. Now it is time for Oregon to follow through with their promises.

**Broken Promises include:**

\* In 1995 Oregon promised to not to log in the north and western part of the Elliott, (called long-rotation watersheds) so marbled murrelets and spotted owls could live there. But under the new plan, Oregon will clearcut some of the best forests in those reserves in just a few years.

\* In 1995 Oregon promised to keep 64% of the Elliott in forests over 80 years old, and grow 29% of the Elliott into forests over 156 years old. But under the new plan, Oregon will only have to keep 30% of the forests over 60 years old, and 0% in older forests.

\* In 1995 Oregon promised to protect the 26 owls (13 pairs) that Oregon was not given permission to “take”. No matter what happened to those owls, the forests around their home would remained protected. Under the new plan, those forests can be clearcut if barred owls move the spotted owls to another place.

The ODF and Governor Kitzhaber needs to hear it is *not* OK to break promises made in 1995.

**Killing Wildlife:**

The new plan calls for killing black bears that eat the sweet, soft inner-bark of plantation trees. Their cubs would be removed also. The usual practice is to NOT relocate bears and their cubs, but just kill them instead. Back bears have never caused economic problems before on the Elliott, but higher timber targets means bears must now be “controlled”.

The new plan will continue the nasty practice of killing thousands of Mountain Beavers every year. The Mountain Beaver’s preferred food is poisoned by ODF when they spray herbicides on clearcuts. To prevent the Mountain Beaver from eating the only food left (tree seedlings), they are killed. About 3,000 beavers are currently killed every year. This will double if clearcut acres double.

ODF and Governor Kitzhaber needs to hear it is *not* OK to kill native wildlife living on the Elliott, just to meet a timber target that is way to high to begin with.

**Spotted Owls**

Recently the US Fish and Wildlife released the “Recovery Plan” for the spotted owl. Three of their recommendations specifically asks for cooperation from Oregon’s state forests. Oregon should comply with these recommendations because the existence of an entire species depends on it. One recommendation (Recovery Action 10) is for state land managers to not clearcut historic spotted owl sites – places where the barred owl has moved the spotted owl to a different place, or places that, for whatever reason, the spotted owl has nested before but is not currently living in that spot.

ODF and Governor Kitzhaber need to promise that Oregon will comply with all the recommendations of the Spotted Owl Recovery Plan that apply to state lands, including Recovery Action 10, 19, and 32.

**Monitoring**

ODF promises to monitor this plan, to make sure any remaining environmental protections are honored. However, ODF then mentions that the state’s monitoring budget currently is unfunded.

ODF and Governor Kitzhaber need to hear it is *not* OK to log without a monitoring program, especially an intense logging program that clearcuts hundreds or thousands of acres of older, native forests, that sprays toxic herbicides, that kills native wildlife, and that uses prison labor being paid only about $2.00 a day. If monitoring is not funded, no logging can happen.

Feel free to modify the letter below to email in:

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Dear Governor Kitzhaber and Oregon Department of Forestry,

You must not approve the new proposed Forest Management Plan (FMP) for the Elliott State Forest. The new FMP will double the rate of clearcutting older, native forests that supports three endangered species, Oregon Coho Salmon, Marbled Murrelets, and Spotted Owls.

The new plan requires far less of the forest to be old enough to provide for endangered species that now live there, like the marbled murrelet and spotted owl. The Forest Management Plan only requires 30% of the forest to be “advanced structure”, and defines that to be as young as 60 years.

The new plan uses the same Riparian Strategies that the ODF proposed in a 2008 Plan. Scientists from both the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Independent Multidisciplinary Science Team (IMST) found this strategy faulty. For instance, the IMST said ODF’s “conclusions are professional conjecture and not based on research…” and the riparian strategy to be “a convoluted series of assumptions and inferences, potentially rendering the approach subject to compounded errors or weaknesses of induction.”

The Elliott State Forest, in Oregon’s Coast Range, has been found to be able to store more carbon per acre than virtually any other place in the world. Old forests can store far more carbon than young plantations. Oregon should protect this world-class resource, not clearcut it.

Oregon should comply with the June 2011 Recovery Plan for the Spotted Owl. Recovery Actions 10, 19, and 32 ask for cooperation from state lands. Since a new plan for the Elliott is being written right now, it is the best time to incorporate these important recommendations.

The Elliott State Forests contains “common school fund lands” to help provide our children with a good education. The best education we can provide our children is a good example of how protect all of the species that share this world with us.

Sincerely

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Email comments soon to: ODFStateForestsComments@odf.state.or.us

Also send your comments to the three State Land Board members:

Ted Wheeler, Oregon State Treasurer

159 State Capitol, 900 Court Street NE

Salem, OR 97301

Phone: (503) 378-4329

Email:  oregon.treasurer@state.or.us

Louise Solliday, Director Department of State Lands

775 Summer St. NE, Salem, OR 97301-1279

louise.c.solliday@dsl.state.or.us

Governor Kitzhaber

160 State Capitol, Salem, OR 97301-4047

Link to Email:

<http://governor.oregon.gov/Gov/contact.shtml>

Kate Brown, Oregon Secretary of State

136 State Capitol, Salem, OR 97301

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