

Timber companies sue over expansion of Ore. monument

MEDFORD (AP) — Two Oregon lumber companies are challenging the legality of former President Barack Obama's expansion of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument.

Murphy Co. and Murphy Timber Investments LLC sued in federal court in Medford Friday naming President Donald Trump and federal agencies.

The *Mail-Tribune* says the Trump administration could choose not to defend the lawsuit.

Before leaving office, Obama added about 48,000 acres to the monument in southwestern Oregon days to

protect its biodiversity.

Murphy Co. President John Murphy says more than 80 percent of the federal land in the expansion area is dedicated to timber production under the O&C Lands Act.

He says removing those acres from the timberland base managed by BLM will reduce the supply of timber sold and jeopardizes the company's log supply.

Murphy Timber Investments argues the expansion will reduce the value of about 2,100 acres of timberland it owns within the boundary as well as land outside it.

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