

## REGIONAL

# Environmentalists criticize Beuter appointment

WASHINGTON (AP) — Environmentalists criticized the timber industry's links to an Oregon forestry economist newly appointed to a top federal job overseeing the U.S. Forest Service.

Agriculture Secretary Clayton Yeutter on Friday appointed John Beuter of Corvallis as his new deputy assistant secretary for natural resources and the environment.

Beuter, a former Oregon State University professor who now works for a forestry consulting firm in Portland, will become the top assistant to Assistant Agriculture Secretary James Moseley effective next month.

"John has many years of experience

in forestry management and economics," Yeutter said in a statement from the international trade talks in Brussels, Belgium.

"He will be able to use his background to help promote natural resource conservation and work with state and local governments and other federal agencies involved in this task," he said.

Beuter, 54, is a forest economist for Mason, Bruce and Girard Inc. of Portland, a leading consulting firm in the timber industry.

Environmentalists said Friday his work on behalf of some of the nation's largest timber companies may bias him against efforts to slow logging in the

Northwest's old growth forests.

Earlier this year, the activists accused Beuter and other co-authors of an industry study of exaggerating anticipated job loss tied to protecting the northern spotted owl.

Sydney Butler, The Wilderness Society's vice president for conservation, said Friday that Beuter's "work on behalf of the timber industry is well known."

Tim Hermach, executive director of the Native Forest Council based in Eugene said, "Clayton Yeutter wants to sell all the trees to make a buck and has chosen a good man to help him."

Andy Kerr, conservation director of the Oregon Natural Resources Council,

said Beuter's timber supply studies have been overly optimistic and misleading because they suggest that the national forests can make up for timber shortfalls on private lands.

"His two timber supply studies were not critical in nature, in that they assumed for example that the Forest Service will spend more money per acre than Weyerhaeuser does to grow trees," he said.

Beuter, in a telephone interview from his Portland office, said the criticism was unfounded.

"That's an inaccurate representation of me. My interests are professional forestry. I'm a forester," Beuter said.

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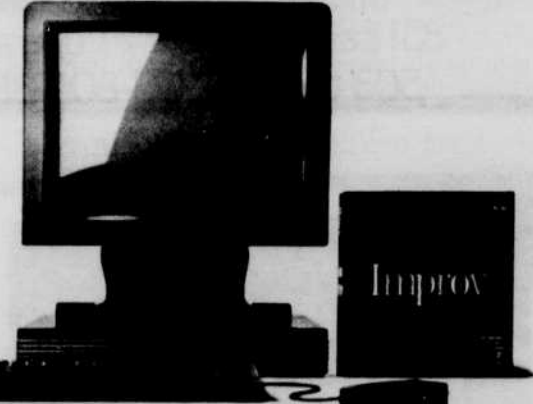
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