

# Roberts: Timber plan upsets all

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton appears to be well on his way to finding a Northwest forest solution that will upset loggers and environmentalists alike, Oregon Gov. Barbara Roberts said Monday.

"At the timber conference, the president said, 'If we do this right, everyone will be mad.' I think they may have succeeded," Roberts said.

Roberts met with Vice President Al Gore and Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt in separate sessions Monday to get an update on the administration's efforts to find a Northwest compromise.

"I think it is clear the president is involved in the process at this point in time. I don't think a decision has been made yet," Roberts told reporters after meeting with Babbitt.

Roberts, a first-term Democrat, said the loss of timber jobs is unavoidable under any of the management alternatives being considered, but that the timber industry is grossly exaggerating the impact.

One industry estimate put the job loss in excess of 80,000 if timber harvests fall as low as 1.2 billion board feet on federal lands in Western Oregon, western Washington and Northern California.

"We are not going to lose 80,000 jobs in Oregon under any one of the components of this plan," Roberts said.

"I think we could say without reservation there will be jobs lost as a result of the plan. I don't believe there is any way to meet scientific credibility and honesty and still protect all of the jobs that are part of the industry now," she said.

The governor said timber communities in her state "have a reason to be fearful."

"We are talking about an industry that has been a major, and in some cases the only, employer in some communities. This is a very difficult period for those communities," she said.

Roberts said it is possible to resume some logging in the region without securing an exemption to environmental laws, which is one of the options reportedly under consideration.

Later, after a meeting with Rep. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., Roberts told reporters, "There are some pieces I still don't have details on."

"It will be knowing those details — knowing what the final scientific pieces look like, knowing what the final economic pieces look like — that will determine my final comfort level," she said.

Wyden and Roberts said they would be working to bolster timber-related jobs that don't depend on such high levels of harvests. Wyden said he is not interested solely in retraining workers.

"We don't accept the idea of the federal government rolling into timber-dependent communities and saying, 'Okay, everybody here is going to become a computer jockey,'" Wyden said.

Roberts said the timber harvest levels of the 1980s "are clearly unrealistic, particularly with the news last week that there have been some discrepancies for a number of years in the number of available acres of harvest in Oregon and Washington."

Roberts was referring a report Oregon State University forest economist K. Norman Johnson prepared for President Clinton, which said harvest potential was greatly exaggerated in the 1990s forest plans for 17 national forests in Oregon and Washington.

According to the memo obtained by The Oregonian newspaper, the Willamette National Forest plan overstated the amount of timber that could be sold by 40 percent, and the Umpqua National Forest plan overestimated its potential timber yield by 30 percent.

Leaders of two dozen environmental groups asked Attorney General Janet Reno on Monday to investigate possible criminal wrongdoing by Forest Service officials in arriving at those estimates.

"It is clear that this was done to justify unsustainably high levels of timber cutting on the forests in violation of the National Forest Management Act and other federal laws," said Larry Tuttle, executive director of the Oregon Natural Resources Council.

# Legislator denies harassment charges

SALEM (AP) — State Sen. Rod Johnson denied the latest sex harassment allegations against him Monday and said his opponents are lining up "phantom accusers" to make new charges.

"The efforts of the people behind this attack are reminiscent of the McCarthyism of the 1950s and are despicable," the Roseburg Republican said at a news conference.

Johnson, accompanied by his wife, Cathy, read a prepared statement but declined to answer reporters' questions about who might be behind such an effort against him.

A spokeswoman for the Women's Rights Coalition called Johnson's assertion about being the victim of a "witch hunt" absurd and said that Johnson was only trying to divert attention from his own inappropriate conduct.

Over the weekend, *The Register-Guard* newspaper in Eugene reported that three more current or former legislative employees have said they were the target of unwanted sexual advances or inappropriate conduct by Johnson. None of the three women would agree to be identified in the newspaper story.

Two other women earlier made similar accusations against the 39-year-old Roseburg senator.

One of them, Michelle Mitchell, a former Johnson staffer, confronted the senator as he was leaving the news conference.

"You're a liar," Mitchell told Johnson.

"You are the liar," Johnson shot back.

In May, Johnson apologized for "inappropriate comments" he made to Mitchell but continued to deny her allegations that he made unwelcome sexual advances while the two were on a business trip.

Meanwhile, the majority Democrats in the Senate announced plans to meet Tuesday to discuss possible disciplinary action against Johnson.

Senate Majority Leader Dick Springer said the latest allegations against Johnson "certainly seem consistent with what we've heard from other women who've been employed by the Legislature."

"If these allegations are true, and I have no reason to doubt them, then we've got an obligation to weigh some very serious sanctions, including a possible censure," the Portland Democrat said.

The controversy over Johnson's reported harassment of women working around him also threatened to become the source of a partisan squabble in what already has been a contentious legislative session.

Springer said the latest accusations involved conduct by Johnson when he was serving in the Republican-controlled House in 1991. For that reason, Springer said, House Speaker Larry Campbell and other House Republicans should conduct their own investigation of Johnson.

"It happened on their watch and involved their own member," Springer said. "There's no question they should be looking at this."

Dan Jarman, a spokesman for Campbell, said that the speaker's office never received a complaint against Johnson while the Roseburg lawmaker was serving in the House.

"If we would have, we would have dealt with it and taken immediate action," Jarman said.

At this point, the House's internal rules preclude it from investigating conduct that's nearly two years old, he said.

"Even if we could get involved at this time, we would have no authority over Sen. Johnson since he doesn't belong to this body," Jarman added.

# Eugene man loses drug-test appeal

WASHINGTON (AP) — A Federal Aviation Administration technician from Eugene, Ore., who was fired for refusing to take a drug test, lost a Supreme Court appeal Monday.

Without comment, the court let stand the dismissal of Gerald Watson Jr.

Watson was an electronics technician at an FAA field office in Eugene that installed and maintained navigation and air traffic control equipment.

On Aug. 18, 1988, he was summoned for a random drug test required under the government's "drug-free federal work-

place" policy.

Watson consulted a lawyer, who told him the test was illegal because a federal appeals court had barred post-accident drug testing of railway employees unless officials had reason to believe a worker was using drugs. That ruling later was reversed by the Supreme Court.

Watson refused to take the drug test, although he went to a private clinic and underwent a test that showed no drug use.

The FAA's regional manager suspended Watson. He was fired the following December.

An administrative judge for the

Merit Systems Protection Board reduced the penalty to a 45-day suspension and ordered Watson reinstated with back pay. The agency abused its discretion in removing Watson, the judge said.

The full Merit Systems Protection Board, however, reversed and ordered Watson fired. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit upheld the firing last year.

In the appeal acted on Monday, Watson's lawyers said the board should have deferred to the administrative judge's evaluation of the regional manager's testimony.

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