

Government should aid forests, not industries

OUR OPINION: Forest Service should appease public, not bureaucrats

For a state that attributes the majority of its beauty to its lush, green landscape, Oregon certainly watches a lot of trees fall in its national forests.

Even though part of Oregon's economy is dependent on logging, there is no excuse for the numerous forests that have been thinned in the past few years; the Willowa-Whitman National Forest that lies in the Elkhorn Range in eastern Oregon is a good example of this.

This logging was not initiated by private Oregon logging companies, but by the U.S. Forest Service, who is now planning to harvest again, this time in the eastern Elkhorns.

The Forest Service will not stop there.

If all goes as planned, the federal agency will murder trees to the east and south of the Anthony Lakes Mountain Ski Area, by the watershed near Baker City and in the Dutch Wolf analysis area nearby.

The effects of these harvests will include the possible contamination of Baker City's drinking water and the failure to eliminate one of our last options for ecosystem restoration.

Meanwhile, the demand for campgrounds, hiking trails, wilderness areas and other recreational facilities is on the rise.

One might wonder why the U.S. Forest Service is cutting down all of these trees when the public is demanding the opposite.

The reason is that their

recent moves to cut down trees all over the nation in states such as Michigan and Alaska are not actions so much as they are reactions.

Republican Sen. Ted Stevens of Alaska is one of the major reasons the U.S. Forest Service is so busy reacting. Stevens was recently quoted as saying, "If the Forest Service targets less than 3 percent of its activities toward timber production, why should there be a Forest Service?"

The Forest Service's recent move to cut down so many trees nationwide could be attributed to its attempt to stay in existence. But trees aren't the only things that the Forest Service is cutting: It plans to cut its work force by 10 percent this year and next year.

Keep in mind that Oregon's logging companies are also guilty of the recent tree massacres. These sawmill owners have been pressuring the Forest Service to chop down more trees in Oregon's national forests to prevent them from experiencing a shortage of private timber.

We, unlike the Forest service, do not sympathize with these poor loggers who are now suffering from a shortage of trees — a shortage they created.

Our government agencies should not assume that the solution to everlasting greed is short-term destruction.

If the Forest Service would like to increase its odds of survival, it should focus more on gaining revenues from non-destructive recreational activities and less on accommodating Oregon sawmill owners and heartless senators like Stevens.



LETTERS

OSPIRG hypocrisy

I walked across my front porch this morning to find several OSPIRG posters blowing onto my sidewalk amongst other garbage.

It's striking to think how many well-intentioned student programs are polluted by OSPIRG's hypocrisy. This was especially apparent during elections.

OSPIRG, an alleged proponent for individual rights and environmental solutions, used student monies to campaign for further mandatory student fees.

Its main strategy for political success was hundreds and hundreds of full-color, very expensive and difficult to recycle posters that now litter the streets of our campus and community.

Josh Akin
Physics

Oil crisis hoax

Don't we really know why gasoline prices have been steadily rising? It's a game that has been played before by the oil companies in 1972, manipulating the "stupid" public and the media.

As for the new Iraqi oil crisis since the Gulf War, there has not been one because the United States has implemented a boycott.

Calling the oil situation with Iraq a "crisis" is a pure propaganda tactic.

I suspect that the all out war on the environment by the Republican-dominated Congress and their mad desire to exploit yet another natural treasure — the Arctic Wildlife Refuge of Alaska — is the true motivation behind the new "oil crisis." There is *some* oil there, but only enough to sustain the greedy U.S. for a few months. This plan would destroy the last vast wilderness area left in America.

The callous senators from Alaska, Stevens and Murkowski, see not the need for wilderness, but money.

Instead of involving the

country in pollution control by finding alternatives to gas-powered transportation, the Republicans in Congress choose to focus on destroying the environment.

All they see is the short-term payoff, while our future becomes clouded with global warming and the destruction of our health.

Hilde K. Cherry
Eugene

Own up Douglass 4

It is true that the decision to relocate the residents of the fourth floor of Douglass Hall was made prior to the incidents of racial bigotry by that community during dead week and finals week.

As Matt Hilber points out in his letter to the editor (*ODE*, April 30), the fourth floor had already engaged in enough disrespectful, hurtful and dangerous behavior prior to the racial slurs being yelled from their windows during dead week and finals week to warrant the floor's dissolution.

Hilber seems to draw a distinction between the behavior that resulted in the dissolution of the floor and the acts of racial intolerance and hatred that emanated from that community.

While it is true that the prior acts resulting in dissolution were different from the acts of bigotry during dead and finals weeks, there is a common theme and pattern that was present in both sets of behavior.

Both sets of behavior were grossly irresponsible, hurtful and inappropriate in a civilized community. In both sets of behavior, it was clear that the behavior was emanating from the fourth floor of Douglass Hall and that the community on that floor fostered an environment of protecting the floor members involved in the irresponsible behavior.

Community members everywhere share responsibility for the behavioral norms of that community. Unfortunately, the community norms developed by fourth floor Douglass Hall

residents were characterized by immaturity, vandalism, disrespect for others and bigotry.

I am unaware of anyone from the fourth floor Douglass community who attempted to intervene to change that norm.

While housing staff made efforts at such intervention, it became clear by the end of winter term that the lack of civility demonstrated by residents of the fourth floor made it unreasonable to work with this group in a way that we normally would.

Therefore, the decision was made to disband the floor (pending conduct action against some residents has since resulted in their removal altogether from the residence halls).

While the particular acts of vandalism, disrespect and bigotry emanating from that community are of grave concern, of equal concern is the fact that there seemed to be no individual from this particular community willing to work with housing staff and other members of the community to say, "This must stop."

We also needed to hear something like, "We can't continue to permit the group norm of this community to deteriorate. We must begin to take some responsibility for our community and behave in a respectful and civil manner."

Although long overdue, it is still possible for Hilber and his former hall mates to take responsibility for the actions of their community.

I would like to invite them to do so now by reporting who was involved in the incidents of bigotry, as well as the burning, vandalism and other incidents, which occurred on the fourth floor throughout the fall and winter terms.

Better yet, encourage those members to come forward (i.e., discuss their actions with Elaine Green, conduct coordinator, the Office of Public Safety or Kelly Messick, Walton resident director) and take personal responsibility for their actions.

Mike Eyster
University Housing Director

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