

February 2-29

**20%
OFF****ALL BLACK
HISTORY
TITLES**No further
discounts.**BLACK
HISTORY
MONTH**UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
BOOKSTORE**FIRE**

continued from page 1

network dedicated to education, advocacy and protection of the Klamath and Siskiyou National Forests. "There were rumors of one about that big in the 1930s, but that was before environmental laws."

What's at stake

On March 19, the Forest Service released a proposed action letter to the public suggesting 96 million board feet of logging that would stay within areas designated for timber use.

The official Draft Environmental Impact Statement, or DEIS, that followed was released in November and included the original proposed action. The statement — required under the guidelines of the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA — gives seven possible courses of action the Forest Service could take regarding the area. Included in these possibilities is one Forest Service "preferred alternative," as well as a "no action" plan that would leave the land untouched.

Option No. 7, the Forest Service's preferred alternative, suggests 518 million board feet of logging across 29,090 acres of land, more than five times the amount of its proposed action from March, which is option No. 2.

Option No. 6, the most extreme proposal contained in the statement, calls for 1.02 billion board feet of logging — enough to fill a line of logging trucks 2,700 miles long, according to

the Siskiyou Project.

Skar said the impact statement was significantly delayed and was originally set to be released in July, adding that the statement is full of errors, which may challenge the legality of the proposal.

"Right now, I believe (the Forest Service's) proposal is not only extreme, but illegal," he said.

Biscuit Fire Forest Service spokeswoman Judy McHugh said the Biscuit impact statement was delayed because a 66-page report about the original proposed action — released through Oregon State University after the 30-day public comment period had expired — stated that the agency had not considered all possible alternatives.

"We recognized that our statement hadn't looked at the full range, so we went back and did so," McHugh said.

Activists speak out

Some environmental activists still feel the current proposal would have serious repercussions.

The Oregon Natural Resources Council released a 200-page DEIS critique that was submitted to the Forest Service during the 60-day public comment period, which expired Jan. 20.

ONRC Western Oregon Field Representative Doug Heiken said he authored a summary of the report that focuses on the Forest Service's preferred alternative. The truncated version of the critique claims any salvage logging would remove the least flammable portion of the trees while leaving behind the most flammable, and more than 10,000 acres of non-

inventoried roadless areas would not be protected or recognized under the NEPA process.

While McHugh declined to comment specifically on ONRC's report, she said there may be errors in the DEIS but it contains nothing illegal.

"The agency feels their analysis is the best possible effort they can do," she said. The preferred alternative of the Forest Service DEIS calls for 12,179 acres of roadless area logging, in spite of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule signed into law by President Clinton in January 2000, which protected 58.5 million acres of national forest land from most types of commercial logging and road building.

On Dec. 12, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit ruled to protect the roadless rule after its implementation had been blocked by an Idaho judge in May 2001. An U.S. District Court in Wyoming overturned the rule in July 2003, holding it in violation of NEPA and the Wilderness Act.

Heiken said the Forest Service is relying on a state-level ruling for the Siskiyou DEIS.

"They're basically acting like the roadless rule doesn't apply when it does," he said. "That's a huge legal problem."

However, McHugh said the rule was no longer in effect because of the Wyoming ruling.

"They may want to believe that the federal court in Wyoming doesn't have jurisdiction elsewhere," she said. "But the Forest Service's interpretation at this time is that we're back to our

standards. And so is every other national forest."

An uncertain future

On Sept. 18, the Bush administration announced plans to develop new rules governing the 43 million acres of national forests in the lower 48 states. On Christmas Eve, the administration finalized an agreement with Alaska to allow exemptions for logging in roadless areas of the Tongass National Forest, despite 250,000 public comments opposing the plan. Spanning 17 million acres, which include 9 million roadless acres, Tongass is the largest rainforest in the United States.

Skar said the Biscuit Fire salvage project is the first in the nation to specifically propose roadless logging, and he expected it to set a precedent that will echo across the national forest system while the Roadless Area Conservation Rule is tied up in the courts.

In 2000, the Siskiyou Project unsuccessfully campaigned to have 1.2 million acres of the Siskiyou National Forest declared a national monument under the name "Siskiyou Wild Rivers." Currently, 183,000 acres of the forest is a federally protected wilderness area.

"Once you log in an area, it's not available for that kind of protection," Skar said, adding that logging would fundamentally change the diversity of the ecosystem.

Contact the Pulse editor
at aaronshakra@dailyemerald.com.

Student Groups

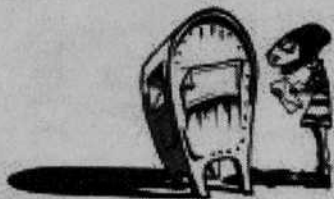
Advertise in the Oregon Daily Emerald.
Call 346-3712 to speak with a sales rep.
We have great University rates.

You're always close to campus
www.dailyemerald.com

Measure 30**Tomorrow is the last day to vote!**

A **yes vote** is a vote to keep the state budget the way it is by increasing income taxes for three years. The average taxpayer will see a \$36 increase per year. People who make less than \$10,000 per year will see no increase.

A **no vote** is a vote to not increase income taxes for three years and cut \$575 million from the state budget. \$7.5 million of these cuts are cuts to higher education, and \$2 million of those cuts are to the University of Oregon. The UO will compensate for the cuts through increased tuition, increased class sizes and/or reduced heating in classrooms.



Have your ballot, but don't want to pay postage? Drop it off in the white elections box in the EMU. Don't know where it is? See the map --->

**asuo
executive**

It's all about the ASUO working for you!

Tomorrow, Tuesday, Feb. 3, is the last day to vote.
So get your ballot in by 8 p.m.

Can't get to the campus drop-off? Are you registered and didn't get your ballot? The ASUO will drive you to the county elections office tomorrow from 1 p.m. to 8 p.m.

To get picked up, call (541) 346-0628.

It's your money. It's your decision.

Vote.

Ballot Drop-off Map (EMU)