

Timber

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distributed to homes.

One danger of leaving too much downed timber is possible damage from a wildfire. A fire would remove the ground cover and increase turbidity, or murkiness, in the water.

The preferred option in the environmental impact statement would leave the blown down timber in sensitive areas, Kennedy said. Forest Service personnel believe the 2,400 acres can be logged without adversely affecting water quality, Kennedy said.

The Forest Service is not planning any other logging activity in the Bull Run's 68,000-acre drainage area. Logging is occurring in the 27,000-acre buffer zone.

In addition, about 500 acres of blown down timber is being logged in the drainage area. Some trees still are standing in that area, but most are dying.

The Forest Service's preferred proposal calls for clearcutting 1,968 acres and selective cutting on 424 acres of the 2,392-acre site. The blowdown covers 5,770 acres, or 8.8 percent of the watershed.

The Forest Service has more stringent controls on logging practices inside the Bull Run Watershed than on other Forest Service land, Kennedy said.

The Forest Service has logged within the watershed since the 1950s, and reportedly allowed limited logging in the watershed before that.

Some of the blowdown occurred next to logged areas, Kennedy said. There are logging practices, such as



Photo by Scott Newton

A danger of leaving Bull Run Watershed's blown down timber in place is wildfire, which would destroy the ground cover.

shaping the edge of a unit, that may help reduce blowdown in the future, she said.

Environmentalists, representatives of the timber industry, the Portland Water Bureau, the Portland City Council and congressional

delegations met in a series of 11 or 12 meetings in 1985 and agreed to allow logging on 500 acres, Kennedy said. The group also agreed to the method the Forest Service is following in seeking public testimony.

Public hearings on the proposed

alternatives are planned in July. People may check out a copy of the Bull Run Blowdown Draft Environmental Impact Statement at the office of the Columbia Gorge Ranger District, 31520 S.E. Woodard Road, Troutdale.

Some logging in Bull Run OK

Fire in watershed blowdown has the potential for disaster

Bruce Niss, watershed resource advisor for the Portland Water Bureau, said some portion of the timber blown down by a storm in 1983 should be logged to help maintain water quality in the Bull Run Watershed.

Niss, who described his job as a forest manager, said logging can play a part in good forest management.

Niss said the priority of the Portland Water Bureau and the Forest Service is to maintain good water quality. The Bull Run Watershed provides drinking water for about 650,000 users in the Portland metropolitan area.

Niss said a blowdown is a "fire controller's nightmare" because it can burn easily and can be hard to fight because of the large logs left on the ground.

If there was a fire in the Bull Run Watershed, it could adversely affect water quality by burning off vegetation, leading to erosion and increased turbidity.

The Environmental Protection Agency claims turbidity reduces the effectiveness of chlorination. Water is chlorinated to kill bacteria.

After an area is logged there is usually some controlled burning, and

then reforestation. Burning is nature's way of managing the forest. Niss said the entire Bull Run Watershed has been entirely burned off in the past 600 years.

When an area is reforested, stands of more desirable trees such as Douglas fir get a chance to take hold. A blowdown area, left unmanaged, is usually overtaken by hemlock and brush.

An experiment conducted at Fox Creek in the Bull Run Watershed also has Niss concerned about leaving blowdowns untended.

In the experiment, a logged area was burned on one side, but the slash was left on the other half. They measured the water quality over the years and in the unburned area, the content of nitrogen in the water went "up and up and up."

Nitrogen makes it easier for algae to grow in water. Though chlorination would kill the algae, there could be "taste and odor problems."

Niss said the amount of logging recommended by the Forest Service in its Bull Run Blowdown Draft Environmental Impact Statement — cutting 2,400 acres of the 6,000-acre blowdown — would not exceed historic levels of logging and thus should not affect water quality.



Bruce Niss relaxes in front of a fountain in the Bull Run Watershed. Water quality is the top priority in management of the watershed.

Diversion

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precedent would be set for all scenic waterways in Oregon if the Portland plan is allowed to operate. The Portland project would remove water from the Bull Run River before it could reach the scenic waterway.

Diack and his uncle, Arch Diack, and several private environmental and business groups are fighting the court battle with their own money. By passing the resolution, the county board joins the plain-

tiffs in the case.

Casterline said the county may share some of the costs of the case. She said it is a nominal amount.

Casterline is strongly opposed to the project, and says the board's decision can be seen as a warning to the Portland Water Bureau.

"This at least gives them some warning that the county is not happy with (the project) and is going to make sure it doesn't happen," she said.

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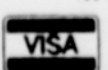
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