

Salvage Gone Mad

Environmentalists react to gigantic timber sale.

This is no ordinary timber sale: With a final proposed extraction of 372 million board feet (that's the equivalent to 70,000 loaded logging trucks), the Biscuit fire salvage project is the largest timber sale in recent national history. Three of the first five sales sold last week to Oregon timber companies, meaning that logging could already be under way in the Siskiyou National Forest in southwest Oregon, an area that was proposed as a national monument in 2000.

The sales are located within the area of the Biscuit fire that burned in 2002 and surround the Kalmiopsis Wilderness and several important salmon rivers, such as the Rogue, the Illinois and the Chetco. In such a biologically diverse and sensitive area, "This is the last place you want to do logging," said Dominick DellaSala of the Klamath-Siskiyou branch of the World Wildlife Fund.

With cutting planned in 6,750 acres of land designated under the Northwest Forest Plan as late successional reserves (LSR), much of which are old-growth forests, and 8,150 acres of inventoried roadless areas, the sale plows straight through logging regulations left intact from the Clinton administration. Judy McHugh of the Biscuit Fire Recovery Project says that the Forest Service plan meets the 13 standards and guidelines that allow for cutting in the LSR. The other 4,500 acres of land are within matrix lands, open to logging under the Northwest Forest Plan.

Environmentalists at state and national levels are outraged by the Bush administration's manipulation of intact and highly supported environmental policies, such as the roadless area rule, which prohibits logging in certain areas with a high environmental value. Members of Greenpeace International as well as local organizations have conducted onsite protests and have petitioned Oregon representatives to stop the logging.

Josh Laughlin of the Cascadia Wildlands Project says that justification for the salvage sale relies on bogus scientific reports, such as the Session's Report released last year claiming the need to log as much as possible as fast as possible in order to prevent future fires and to effectively rebuild future owl habitat.

"Basically what we're seeing is a payback to the over \$1 million the (timber) industry tucked in George Bush's back pocket," he claims. "This is science for sale and nothing else."

Representatives from several southern Oregon conservation groups requested a temporary restraining order July 16 from a federal court in Medford in order to protect the old growth reserves in the Siskiyou Wild Rivers Area. They claim that the sale will extract more than 50 million board feet of old growth reserve logs. The Forest Service bypassed the customary citizen review process and approved the sales under an "emergency exemption" to salvage the burned timber and recreate habitats.

However, wildfires naturally help to shape diversity and are important in evolving ecosystems, said DellaSala. And Laughlin says, "It's absurd to say that the spotted owl habitat was decimated." He claims that owls still utilize burned habitat. Then why pay money — a March 2004 *Eco Northwest* report finds that extraction of over 300 million board feet will cost the U.S. Treasury more than \$34 million — to destroy habitat that still exists, then try to rebuild it as though it were natural?

This is without mention of the potential erosion and other damage to sensitive ecosystems that is caused by logging in watershed areas. "Our concerns have to do with impacts on wild salmon and degrading streams," explains Don Smith of the Siskiyou Project, one of the organizations that requested the restraining order. Healthy streams and rivers are crucial to wild salmon survival.

McHugh claims that the Biscuit Fire Recovery Project includes the logging of the

area as well as replanting and reconstruction of lost habitat. "We feel like we're making an investment," she said.

The Bush administration's recent announcement of termination of the roadless area rule provides a timely open door to timber companies, allowing cutting to go ahead while state governments scramble to set up comprehensive policies. Even though Gov. Kulongoski recently declared the Siskiyou Wild Rivers Area "a natural resource jewel — not only to Oregon but to the nation," there may not be time for him to petition the Forest Service. "That's problematic because roadless areas are on the chopping block now," said Laughlin.

Environmentalists agree that the Biscuit Fire Recovery Project will devastate old growth reserves, harm important habitats and ruin recreation in the area. "People go to the Siskiyou rivers area for beauty and solitude, not for clear-cuts and muddy rivers," said Laughlin. "It takes decades to recreate habitat that we already have." **EW**



OLD-GROWTH FOREST MARKED FOR LOGGING IN THE CHETCO WATERSHED AS PART OF THE BISCUIT SALE.

COURTESY, CWP

LANE COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S Renewable Energy Technician Program

is accepting NEW STUDENTS for fall 2004



Student Dan Orleck with a photovoltaic solar panel

Lane Energy Management/Renewable Energy Technician Program is funded by EWEB & BPA

For information about the Renewable Energy Management program, call Roger Ebbage at (541) 463-3977.



an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution



PEACE on EARTH begins at BIRTH!

SWEET POTATO PIE

- HEMP & organic cotton clothing for men, women & kids
- Glass, incense, tapestries & gifts
- Stickers, t-shirts, jewelry & more!

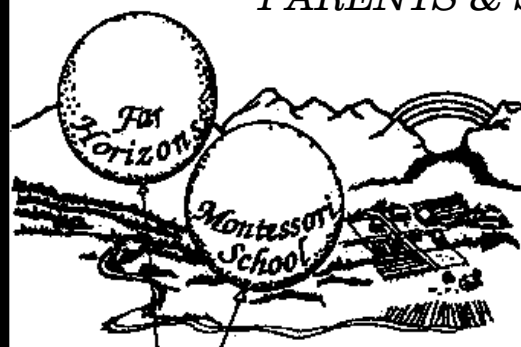
Fly on by for a PIECE of the PIE!

Mon-Sat 10-9/ Sun 12-6
Corner of 11th & Willamette in the ♥ of Downtown Eugene

FAR HORIZONS MONTESSORI SCHOOL CELEBRATES

25 Years!

CALLING ALL FORMER STUDENTS, PARENTS & STAFF



You are invited to our

October Celebration

Let us know where you are . . .

For more info, log on to:
www.farhorizonsmontessori.com

or call: 485-0521
2490 Hilyard St. • Eugene