

Tackling Global Warming on Multiple Fronts



Chichagof Island, photo by John Schoen

The nation's forests absorb about 10 percent of the carbon dioxide that the United States produces, according to Ann Ingerson, a Wilderness Society researcher whose paper on the importance of forests in slowing global warming is now being peer-reviewed before publication. "There is credible evidence that this percentage could be doubled or tripled if we maintain existing forests and restore those that have been depleted," she says.

Ingerson, based in Vermont, is one of many staff members who are devoting time to this rapidly growing concern. "Ecologists, economists, GIS mapping specialists, policy analysts, and

land management professionals have a role to play," explains Linda Lance, their vice president for public policy and co-chair of our Global Warming Working Group. As usual, they also are joining forces with other environmental organizations, and Congress is tackling the issue this summer, so they are seeking to make the most of that opportunity.

"The work that we have been doing for the past 72 years is more important than ever and needs to continue," says Wendy Loya, an ecologist in their Alaska office. "Wilderness, wildlife refuges, national parks, and other public lands should serve as models for

how healthy ecosystems naturally store carbon." Our national forests, for example, make up eight percent of the U.S. land base.

Another benefit of preserving large natural areas is that wildlife populations are less likely to be isolated as conditions change. Being able to migrate across a protected landscape will give species a better chance to adapt and survive.

"Unfortunately," says Lance, "the Bush administration's energy policy continues to place heavy emphasis on fossil fuels. Aggressive efforts to turn the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the Wyoming Range, and other special places into oil and gas fields will only accelerate global warming, while threatening some of our most treasured landscapes and wildlife."

"Global warming is an issue of unending complexity," notes Ingerson. "For example, biofuels could reduce our reliance on carbon-producing fossil fuels. But for woody biofuels, it's important that we harvest carefully so that healthy forests continue to pull more carbon from the air. And our oldest forests, which store tremendous reserves of carbon, should certainly not be converted into wood chips."

Reprinted with permission from The Wilderness Society www.fws.org.

Commissioner of the Month Speaks— Chris Giunchigliani, Clark County NV



It is often said that charity begins at home. So does conservation. That is why as the clock ticks on the environment, Clark County, Nevada, one of the nation's largest and fastest growing counties, is acting quickly to find solutions to conserve the area's natural resources.

As a commissioner, we deal with new mega-developments that threaten to gobble up more of our natural resources. The county owns or leases thousands of square feet of space throughout Southern Nevada. All of that development and growth has an impact on the environment and our commission is working to do something about it.

We know what is possible because in August 2003, Clark County adopted an energy management policy that resulted in more than \$1.8 million in savings through the reduction of energy and water consumed by the county.

But we realized more could be done. In December 2007, the Clark

County Commission unanimously passed the "Eco-County Initiative" that I co-sponsored. The expansive sustainability plan is designed to step up conservation of existing natural resources at the county level and seek participation from surrounding cities.

Some of the goals of the initiative are to continue reducing energy purchases at the county by 20 percent by 2015, promote solar demonstration projects and study the impact of county facilities on the environment.

This initiative has great promise. It takes a methodical approach to ensuring that no stone is left unturned at the county when it comes to looking at conservation efforts.

We also know we can't do this alone and that's why we have invited our neighboring cities and other local governments to join us at the table to create policies that matter.

We are now in the process of inviting key community leaders to join a working group that would study and recommend a series of measures to improve conservation.

The group's goal would be to achieve the 2050 climate stabilization goal of reducing global warming emissions to 80 percent below current levels.

The group will be asked to look at the county's greenhouse gas

emissions, the use of recycled paper for janitorial products, using rubberized asphalt for sealing cracks in the road and reducing paper consumption. The group would also review policies that promote infill over sprawl, evaluate the county's building codes to see if any barriers exist to green building and renewable energy and expand the use of reclaimed water for irrigation of parks, schools and other areas.

Our plan is also to establish a regional task force to discuss the issue of conservation and determine the most appropriate policies, goals, guidelines and actions to promote conservation in Southern Nevada.

As we do all of this in our area, the County Commission is also turning to its congressional delegation and the Bush Administration to urge the adoption of federal legislation relating to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening fuel economy standards for cars and light trucks, enacting an energy and environmental block grant program and efforts to pursue federal funding for sustainability studies and projects located in Southern Nevada.

I am hopeful that through our local efforts, we can find new ways to conserve our resources, share them with others and become part of the solution rather than the problem.

Greening Cook County (IL): Recycling

This is part of "Greening Cook County," a multi-faceted look at what Cook County IL can accomplish. Future issues of Networker will continue to feature excerpts from this report.

Encourage "extended producer responsibility."

There is an increasing interest in the environmental community in a concept known as "extended producer responsibility," which requires manufacturers to provide for the disposal of their products at the end of their useful life. One particular advantage of this approach is that it leads manufacturers to design products that can be recycled easily and cheaply. The concept is widespread in Europe, where it is applied most notably to product packaging and electronic devices. However, there are few examples of this practice in the United States to date.

The County should generally encourage extended producer responsibility. Initial purchase prices rarely incorporate lifecycle and end-of-life costs; present pricing policies pass on those externalities to the consumer or the government. Although extended producer responsibility may not spread rapidly, the County should seek to be a leader on this issue, rather than a follower. Whenever possible, the County should favor companies that have adopted elements of extended producer responsibility, and if necessary, should make changes to the purchasing ordinance and other policies to support the practice.

Move routine internal transactions onto the Internet.

The California Performance Review, a comprehensive look at state government initiated by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, has already suggested that the State of California transact more internal business online. The Review focused on administrative, contracting, accounting, personnel, and budget-preparation forms as particularly well-suited to online use.

A study by Open Archives Systems, Inc., referenced in the California Performance Review, indicates how reliant organizations are on paper-based documents and what that reliance means in practice:

- Ninety percent of corporate memory exists on paper;
- Ninety percent of all the pages that get handled each day in the average office are merely shuffled;
- The average document gets copied 19 times;
- Companies spend \$20 in labor to file a document, \$120 in labor to find a misfiled document, and \$220 in labor to reproduce a lost document;
- Seven and a half percent of all documents get lost;
- Three percent of the remainder get misfiled; and
- Professionals spend 5-15 percent of their time reading information, but up to 50 percent looking for it.

Open Archives Systems estimates that an effective document storage and retrieval system could:

- Reduce the amount of time spent filing, locating, and retrieving documents by as much as 75 percent,
- Lower copying, overnight shipping, and filing supply costs by 50 percent, and
- Cut storage costs both on- and off-site by 75 percent.

The costs and benefits of electronic documents are worthy of further investigation. Paper use could be cut dramatically, processing times reduced, and records organized more effectively.

From "Greening Cook County" by Commissioner Mike

Ohio LCV

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energy policy that is focused on renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency standards. Several bills are currently under consideration by the House Public Utilities Committee with a decision to be made in the next month.

If Ohio is serious about attracting manufacturing jobs related to the alternative energy industry, then we need to have a renewable standard that makes Ohio a more appealing location than surrounding states. We are concerned that not providing requirements that move Ohio toward a renewable standard sends the wrong message to the renewable energy industry.

If the Legislature is serious about forging a strong energy future, it needs to pass a plan that calls for at least a 20% renewable standard by 2025 with benchmarks to ensure progress within the next decade.

Ohio League of Conservation Voters



Staff of the Ohio League of Conservation Voters; Executive Director, and author of this article, Bill DeMora, at left.

The Ohio League of Conservation Voters plans a very aggressive legislative agenda in 2008 that highlights several pieces of legislation that will have impacts on counties and local county officials.

The biggest issue that we will be working on in 2008 is the reauthorization of the Clean Ohio Fund (COF) as part of Governor Strickland's \$1.7 billion Ohio Jobs Bond initiative, which will need to be on the ballot in November. The Clean Ohio Fund has been a wildly successful \$400 million bond program that has been utilized in eighty six of eighty eight counties in Ohio. The Fund has four program areas: brownfield redevelopment, green space protection, trail development and farmland protection. Each of these program areas has been utilized to their fullest, and has been praised by county and local officials throughout the

state. Our goal is to have the General Assembly place this initiative on the November ballot, it asks for a \$400 million renewal for the next four years and keeps the current program areas at the same levels of funding. In addition to reauthorizing the COF, this bond package calls for the following:

- \$250 million for investment in renewable and advanced energy
- \$150 million for investing in the state's road, rail and port infrastructure
- \$100 million for development of bioproducts that use renewable sources
- \$200 million for the advancement of the biomedical industry
- \$200 million for establishing an "Ohio Main Streets Renewal Initiative" which is designed to redevelop downtowns in cities and towns across the state
- \$400 million to help local governments with road, bridge, water & sewer projects.

Another major issue we'll be working on this year is The Great Lakes Compact. The Compact is a key component to protecting Lake Erie. One of the greatest challenges facing the Great Lakes region is finding a way to keep the water in the Great Lakes Basin.

The Great Lakes Compact is an agreement among the Great Lakes states designed to prevent outside interests from withdrawing water from the Great Lakes and shipping it to dryer regions. HB 416 (Dolan) has cleared the House Economic Development and Environment Committee and is awaiting consideration on the House floor. Ohio LCV is fully supportive of this effort and has made passage of the compact one of our top priorities.

Global Climate Change is one of the largest threats facing Ohio today. Ohio has done very little to address this issue at the statewide level. Senator D. Miller (D-23) has tried to jump start this process by introducing legislation that would create the Ohio Climate Commission so the state can study the probable impact of climate change and make recommendations to combat the problem. This legislation was introduced last April and thus far has not had a second hearing.

Finally, Ohio needs a statewide

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From the Director . . .



Executive Director Peg Reagan

Federal forests have been a major concern of the Conservation Leaders Network since our inception. We play an important role providing county support to the environmental community and vice versa on a variety of federal forest issues. Counties have traditionally been involved in federal forest issues due in large part to the federal forest revenues received by counties across the country.

In 2007, we kept our members up-to-date on county payments legislation. We produced a global warming/forests handout for distribution at the National Association of Counties (NACo) conference. We worked with county commissioners from O&C counties, both to generate requests for an extension of the public comment period for the Western Oregon Plan Revisions and to oppose the revisions.

We made an important contribution dealing with global warming in 2007, when we helped NACo finally recognize the threat of global warming. Because of our earlier work, we became aware of three different global warming resolutions for NACo from three

commissioners from three different states, all unbeknownst to each other. We were able to bring them together to discuss language and strategy which led to its successful conclusion. Now NACo is beginning to provide important services to counties on global warming.

We also conducted a national survey to determine what county commissioners thought would be most useful to help fight global warming. Providing economic assistance and incentives was rated the highest. Natural resource management, such as maintaining healthy forests and helping counties promote preservation of and restoration of natural habitat such as forests, prairies and wetlands for carbon sequestration (through which landowners could be paid \$2-25 an acre), was also rated highly.

We attended the Cool Counties launch in Richmond VA, and have been promoting the Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration in our newsletter and on our web site. We are also beginning to participate in the Cool Counties leadership calls with King County WA, Arlington County VA, the Sierra Club and others.

The creation of marine reserves in Oregon has been another major focus of the Conservation Leaders Network. This year brought significant changes, from the Governor providing a timeline to the end of Oregon Ocean and the creation of a new

marine stewardship coalition. We monitored Ocean Policy Advisory Council and Marine Reserve Working Group meetings throughout the year, providing public comment and support. We successfully turned out local support for marine reserves in several communities. We worked with commercial fishing interests to move the process along. With the help of Resource Media, we worked on a variety of media efforts, including a full page article in a coastal paper and several supportive letters to the editor throughout the state. We worked with Greenfire Productions to bring their "Common Ground" video to Gold Beach. At the request of the mayor, we drafted Lincoln City's resolution in support of reserves.

We worked on hardrock mining issues in three states, generating over 30 letters from county officials concerned about the problems inherent in the antiquated 1872 hardrock mining law.

We attended the NACo legislative Conference in Washington DC, and brought our "Conservation Makes \$ense" booth to the NACo annual conference in Richmond VA.

We published four issues of *Networker*, and provided members with notice of 28 funding opportunities.

Yes, it was a busy and productive year. Now it's on to 2008!

Peg Reagan

The Economic Value of Healthy Fisheries in Wyoming

Healthy fisheries are part of a healthy economy



Photo credit: Pedro Ramirez, Jr.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Part Two of a multi-part article

Fishing, river rafting and hunting are among the top seven outdoor activities visitors participate in most frequently when they visit Wyoming.

People come to Wyoming in droves to enjoy its scenery and abundant natural resources. According to the Wyoming Business Council, over 4.2 million tourists visit the state annually, and approximately 10 percent of these visitors fish at least once while in the state. Fishing, river rafting and hunting are among the top seven outdoor activities visitors participate in most frequently when they visit Wyoming.

The quality of their fishing experience is especially important to Wyoming's visitors. Seventy-four percent of surveyed visitors agreed that Wyoming is a great place to visit because of its excellent fishing. Only camping and backpacking had higher satisfaction rates, which is due most likely to their higher participation rates.

Fishing trends in Wyoming

Trends in the number of fishing licenses sold in Wyoming are influenced by national economic conditions. Between 1990 and 2000, a decade of robust national economic activity, the number of fishing licenses sold in Wyoming increased 85 percent. Most of this increase was due to non-resident license sales. During this time, non-resident license sales increased 126 percent and resident license sales increased 23 percent. Due to a contracting national economy and the New York City terrorist attacks in September 2001, which dampened travel across the United States, fishing license sales fell 27 percent between 2000 and 2003. Non-residents accounted for nearly all of the losses.

Wyoming's fisheries are the lifeblood of the state's angling community. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, nearly one-third of Wyoming's residents are anglers who spend over 90 percent of their fishing days

in their home state. For policymakers, this is significant because it means that the spending associated with this fishing occurs in-state and directly benefits local economies.

Nearly one-third of Wyoming residents are anglers who spend over 90 percent of their fishing days in their home state.

Rivers make a significant contribution to the Wyoming fishing experience. In 2001, 52 percent of anglers in Wyoming fished on rivers and streams, and 41 percent of all fishing days were spent on rivers and streams. The number of anglers and fishing days spent on Wyoming's rivers fell between 1996 and 2001, which may have been due to persistent drought conditions that encouraged lake and reservoir fishing. Healthy fisheries that support thriving fish populations on rivers are essential to keeping anglers, and their dollars, in Wyoming.

Economic impact of fishing

According to the Wyoming Game & Fish Department, Wyoming angler expenditures increased from nearly \$182 million in 1990 to \$559 million in 2002. Approximately 75 percent of this is spent in Wyoming. This means that in-state angler expenditures increased from \$136 million in 1990 to \$423 million in 2002.

Continued on page seven

Land Acquisition Benefits to Public Agencies

Everyone who acquires land for public use understands how complicated it can be to align the needs of private property owners seeking to sell or protect land with the needs of public agencies seeking to acquire it.

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) structures transactions that align those needs, facilitating a successful acquisition.

TPL can:

Act fast, assume risk

TPL acquires and sells land in its own name, assuming the risks of ownership as well as the costs associated with buying, holding, and selling. Because it functions as a private purchaser, TPL can move quickly in the marketplace in ways that public agencies often cannot. TPL may assume ownership of a property until an agency has the resources to acquire it, or until environmental cleanup has been completed.

Meet agency purchase requirements, secure funds

TPL sells land to public agencies at or below fair market value, as established by an independent appraisal that meets strict agency standards. TPL solves complex issues, such as title irregularities and disputes over water rights, property contamination, and pending litigation. TPL can raise funds from multiple public and private sources, secure private

interim financing, or use such financing tools as installment and lease-purchase sales.

Resolve complexities, defuse conflicts

TPL excels at assembling a single parcel of land from smaller, individually owned properties, and at removing buildings or reconfiguring property boundaries to meet agency requirements. TPL helps businesses, community and environmental groups, and other stakeholders to resolve conflicts over land use or property valuation and can bring together agencies that might not see eye-to-eye on conservation priorities.

Handle innovative financing and distressed properties

TPL meets landowners' financial needs with such tools as life estates, annuities, and payment schedules, thus advancing a transaction. TPL resolves issues around properties in poor condition and then prepares those parcels for use as parks.

Offer a full suite of services

TPL seeks long-term relationships with public agencies by providing services that include setting priorities for conservation, raising conservation funds and acquiring land.

Reprinted courtesy of The Trust for Public Land—www.tpl.org.

Want to contact us? We can be reached by phone at 541 247-8079 or by email at info@conservationleaders.org.

Wyoming Fisheries

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Angler spending in Wyoming increased from \$136 million in 1990 to \$423 million in 2002. This spending provides economic benefits to the state by supporting local businesses and generating incomes for Wyoming residents.

Fishing-related expenditures occur where anglers fish and where they live.

Anglers typically spend money on trip-related expenses in areas near their fishing destinations, and on special equipment near their homes. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service estimates that 30 percent of Wyoming angler expenditures is for trip expenses (including equipment rental, boating costs, guide and access fees, fuel, ice, bait, licenses, permits, and land leasing); 20 percent is for food and lodging; 16 percent is for transportation; and 34 percent is for fishing gear and special equipment, such as tents, boats, campers, and recreational vehicles (see Figure 5). For anglers who live in Wyoming, nearly all of this money is spent in the state. For non-resident anglers, most of this spending (e.g. trip expenses, food, lodging, and a portion of transportation expenses) is in Wyoming, while the remaining money is likely to be spent in their home state.

Within Wyoming, estimated
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Wyoming Fisheries *continued*

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angler expenditures spent in 2002 varied between \$421,000 in Niobrara County and \$51 million in Teton County. These expenditures support hundreds of small businesses and entrepreneurs across the state. The Wyoming Outfitters and Guides Association has over 200 members who provide river fishing and/or float trips. Guided fishing opportunities include boat fishing, with daily rates between \$200 and \$600; and guided wade fishing with rates between \$85 and \$400 per day. An informal, truncated telephone interview with fishing guides and fly-shop owners, conducted by Trout Unlimited officials, revealed that some of these fishing businesses generate annual gross incomes as high as \$250,000, with many businesses having experienced dramatic revenue increases during the past five years.

Angler expenditures, and the businesses they support, create economic benefits for Wyoming communities through job creation, business revenues, and increased personal income. In 2001, Wyoming sportfishing generated over \$227 million in retail sales, \$63 million in salaries and wages, and 3,500 jobs.

Reprinted with permission from Trout Unlimited

Just released by King County WA:

"Preparing for Climate Change: A Guidebook for Local, Regional, and State Governments."

It can be accessed by going to:

www.cses.washington.edu/cig/fpt/guidebook.shtml

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Planning Tools

- Is your county doing open space or green infrastructure planning?
- Does your county manage green space?
- Would you like to know about resources for conservation planning?

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service can help. They have information about tools to assist county and state governments, private landowners, and businesses conserve their natural lands.

These tools include:

Habitat Conservation Plans

<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/hcp/index.html>

Safe Harbor Agreements

http://www.fws.gov/endangered/pdfs/safe_har.pdf

Candidate Conservation Agreements

<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/candidates/index.html>

Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances

<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/pdfs/listing/cca.pdf>

Conservation Bank

<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/pdfs/conservation-banking.pdf>

Grants

<http://www.fws.gov/grants>

Conservation Easements

<http://www.fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/farmbl1.html>

Safe Harbor Agreements

http://www.fws.gov/endangered/pdfs/safe_har.pdf

Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances

<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/pdfs/listing/cca.pdf>

Thanks to member Laura Greathead for the typewriter she donated to the Conservation Leaders Network!

We still need a file cabinet, a long folding table, a book shelf and a small step stool. Let us know if you can donate these items.

In Recognition of Our Many Supporters

The Conservation Leaders Network's effectiveness is directly related to the support and involvement of many dedicated people and organizations across the country.

Many thanks to this year's generous major donors:

\$1,000 +

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Thank you to our many in-kind donors who provided over \$7,250 worth of goods and services!

Thanks to the many people who support our work with gifts of time, insight, experience and energy:

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- California League of Conservation Voters
- Rocky Mountain Chapter Sierra Club (CO)
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- Hawaii's Thousand Friends
- Conservation Voters for Idaho
- Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club
- Iowa Environmental Council
- Cumberland Chapter, Sierra Club (KY)
- Michigan Environmental Council
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- Missouri Coalition for the Environment
- Northern Plains Resource Council (MT)
- Ohio League of Conservation Voters
- Oregon Wild
- Conservation Voters of South Carolina
- Lone Star Chapter, Sierra Club (TX)
- Virginia Conservation Network
- The Lands Council (WA)
- Wyoming Outdoor Council

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Oregon Insert

Due to the importance of the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Western Oregon Plan Revisions (WOPR), which will impact 2.5 million acres of federal forest land, portions of the Conservation Leaders Network's public comments are printed below.

“BLM is acting as though it believes its prior management plans were illegal. On p. XLIII of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) it says, “(3) the BLM has re-focused the goal for management of the BLM-administered lands to the objectives of its statutory mandates . . .” This implies that the agency was not managing for the objectives of the statutory mandates. I do not believe this is correct. BLM is acting as though the settlement agreement was based on a lawsuit the agency would have lost had it been defended in court—rather than on one the timber industry had lost repeatedly.

BLM has misrepresented the O&C Act numerous times throughout the DEIS. The agency repeats its erroneous assertion that the Act mandates the agency to create a very narrow purpose and need . . . Yet a review shows the Act itself does not state that logging is the means by which the agency must manage the O&C lands. . .

BLM's position that “permanent forest production” equals timber production is demonstrably false, as shown by the decade-plus of management under the Northwest Forest Plan. I have heard from BLM staff that if anyone wants other values, there needs to be new legislation. BLM is acting as though the agency has no choice in the matter and that is not true. The agency has managed for a range of forest values under the Northwest Forest Plan, which has been upheld in court, which is more than can be said for the WOPR.

Yet the purpose and need and the revisions do not comply with the O&C Act itself, for they do not provide for “permanent forest production,” nor “providing a permanent source of timber supply,” nor “protecting watersheds,” nor “regulating stream flow,” nor “contributing to the economic stability of local communities and industries,” nor “providing recreational facilities.” Some of these are perhaps more obvious than others. The logging proposed in all Alternatives is clearly detrimental to protecting watersheds and regulating stream flow as is the significant reduction in riparian reserves.

The amount of logging proposed will not provide a permanent source of timber supply. It does not contribute to the economic stability of local communities and industries. It would return those communities to the boom and bust cycle of the timber industry. And it focuses on only one local industry—the timber industry—while ignoring the many other local industries.

It will harm tourism, the recreational industry, fishing and a long list of other industries. It will harm the economic stability of local communities: those whose municipal drinking water systems will be impacted by increased sediment from logging; those whose real estate prices will drop due to nearby “regen harvests”; and those whose ability to attract and keep Oregonians who want a high quality of life will be diminished. I am concerned that the agency invested in an extensive analysis of the socio-economic impacts of timber but neglected to do an analysis for fishing, hunting, recreation, tourism, impacts on drinking water and other societal and economic benefits of these lands, most of which will be harmed by the agency's proposal. There was no economic analysis of the detrimental impacts on local communities.

The settlement agreement called for BLM to, as the Draft DEIS points out, “revise its resource management plans in western Oregon and in that revision the BLM would consider **an alternative** (emphasis

added) that would not create any reserves on the O&C lands, except those reserves required to avoid jeopardy to species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act.” I am concerned that, rather than develop and consider a range of alternatives, the agency chose to develop and consider only alternatives that greatly shrink the reserves and has eliminated the no-action alternative from serious consideration.

The DEIS, p. 12, states: “Based on the language of the O&C Act, the O&C Act’s legislative history, and the decision by the Ninth Circuit Court in *Headwaters v. BLM*, (914 F.2d 1174 (9TH Cir. 1990)), it is clear that the management of timber (including harvesting) is the dominant use of the O&C lands in western Oregon.” Rather, I understand that this case only showed that timber was dominant over wild-life, not over all the other uses outlined in the Act. Additionally, “(t)hen the Portland Audubon sued the BLM and had better results. In 1993 the 9th circuit court of appeals upheld a lower court’s ruling that BLM was violating NEPA and the O&C Act. BLM had claimed that the O&C act required them to log 500 mmbf a year, and that implementing NEPA would illegally reduce that volume. The courts ruled that the O&C Act gave BLM discretion to sell less than 500 mmbf. The court also concluded that nothing in the O&C act authorized a NEPA exemption for O&C lands.” From the Oregon Heritage Forests web site.

I am concerned that the DEIS does not deal with global warming, which will have serious impacts on the agency’s ability to maintain these lands in “permanent forest production” and which could be mitigated to some extent by how these lands are managed. Since forests are a significant repository of carbon and therefore help mitigate global warming—and older forests hold more carbon than younger forests—and the agency has an obligation under the O&C Act to keep these lands in “permanent forest production,” the agency has a mandate to protect the older forests on O&C lands. Cutting big trees will make global warming worse, which will have serious ramifications on existing forests, including insect infestations, increased severity and number of forest fires, and the inability to replant successfully due to drought, all of which will prevent these lands from being in “permanent forest production.” BLM has received numerous directives to incorporate global warming concerns in its decisions, from the General Accounting Office to the Secretary of Interior, and should have done so in this DEIS.

To sum up, BLM did not produce a DEIS with the necessary analysis and information, and is out of step with both Oregon and national public opinion as well as with the O&C Act itself. The Act does not require what the agency is proposing. If it did, why would the industry lawsuits have been rejected?

I have heard repeatedly that no decisions have been made yet. I wonder how this can be true, given the agency’s “decision” to create an exceedingly narrow purpose and need statement and the agency’s “decision” to disregard both the No Action Alternative and the Citizen’s Conservation Alternative because they don’t meet that narrow purpose and need.

But if it is to be believed, the agency could honestly say you gave it your best shot but that there was so much opposition and so many good and varied arguments against the revisions and the alternatives, that now that you ARE making a decision, a decision of reasonableness and sustainability, one that will comply with the O&C Act and maintain these valuable federal lands in permanent forest production, one that will comply with the ESA and other applicable laws, one that will ensure that there will be functioning forests on these lands for generations to come. The agency still has the discretion to do that. I urge you to reject the proposed Alternatives.”

To read the complete text of our comments, go to our web site at www.conservationleaders.org/wopr%20comments. If you’d like to see our rebuttal to BLM’s economic analysis, go to www.conservationleaders.org/wopr%20economic%20rebuttal.htm. And if you’d like to review the environmental community’s collaborative comments, you can find those on our web site, too.



Conservation Leaders Network
PO Box 46
Wedderburn OR 97491

YES! I want to join the Conservation Leaders Network, the only nonprofit organization in the country which focuses on providing support to and forging ties between county commissioners and environmental leaders to protect America's natural resources. Together we must work to encourage ethically and economically responsible decisions that will help protect the natural treasures that complement and complete our communities. *Individual and county memberships are now available. Individual memberships start at \$45/year; county memberships start at \$250/year.*

With my membership, I will get:

- * four issues of the Conservation Leaders Network's quarterly newsletter "Networker"
- * access to the Network's email discussion list, where I can discuss environmental issues with other county leaders and environmental advocates
- * priority access to the Conservation Leaders staff for information and support
- * email notification of conservation and restoration funding opportunities for counties.

Name: _____

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Please make your check payable to the \$45

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