



T**RANSITIONS**

Working for Sustainable Forests and Diversified Economies in America's Pacific Northwest

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\$aving Tax Dollars To Save Forests

Landslide, clearcuts, and logging roads: Clearwater National Forest, Idaho

© Bill Haskins

Saving Tax Dollars To Save Forests

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TRANSITIONS – Journal of The Lands Council

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Easy
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Layout and Design



The Lands Council, S. 517 Division, Spokane, WA 99202-1365 • Phone: 509.838.4912 • Fax: 509.838.5155
Email: tlc@landscouncil.org • Internet: www.landscouncil.org

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\$aving Tax Dollars To Save Forests

by John Osborn, M.D.

When Lewis and Clark journeyed through untracked forests in Indian land, there were no logging roads in the Columbia River ecosystem. Now there are thousands of miles. The 156 National Forests (many in the Northwest) contain nearly 380,000 road miles — plus another 60,000 miles of recently disclosed “ghost roads”.

Logging roads are a bad deal for taxpayers: they cost billions to build and billions to maintain. The Forest Service estimates the maintenance backlog at \$10 billion. Roads also destroy fisheries, invade wildlife sanctuaries, spread noxious weeds, increase forest fire risks, trigger landslides, and worsen floods.

Conservationists have been battling to end taxpayer-funded logging roads for over a decade (I first testified before Congress about logging roads in 1985, thirteen years ago). In recent years conservationists have teamed up with budget hawks and taxpayer rights groups.

In 1996 a budget amendment to cut the timber road subsidy passed by a single vote in the House. Unhappy with the outcome, Speaker Newt Gingrich had the measure revoted the following day. A 211-211 tie vote meant defeat — and the corporate subsidy continued.

In 1997 Reps. John Porter, R-Ill., Joe Kennedy, (D-Mass.), and John Kasich (R-Ohio) led another budget amendment to end the logging road subsidy. The vote on a weak substitute amendment passed, 210-209 — and the corporate subsidy continued.

In September the road subsidy was debated heatedly on the Senate floor, Sen. Bryan (D-Nev.) asking his colleagues to end the logging road subsidy. The vote: 50-50. With Vice President Gore unavailable to break the tie vote, the corporate subsidy continued.

Follow the corporate money and look at the votes. The timber industry gave Senator Larry Craig (R-ID) \$107,791 for his 1996 election bid, plus an additional \$173,123 in “soft” money. During the six-year period starting in 1991 the

American Forest & Paper Association and related PACs gave Slade Gorton (R-WA) \$78,529; and Norm Dicks (D-WA), \$37,350. The Senators who voted for the road-building subsidy averaged \$27,337. During this same 6-year period Congress voted \$458 million in road programs. Boise Cascade invested \$202,500 in PAC and soft money contributions from 1991-1997, and received \$18,894,511 in road credit subsidies; Potlatch spent \$185,966, received \$4,172,731;

Weyerhaeuser spent \$510,834, and received \$7,460,715. These three large timber corporations averaged about \$40 in returns for every \$1 invested in electing politicians.

The new Chief of the Forest Service, Mike Dombeck, has a modest proposal for an 18-month moratorium on building roads into some roadless areas. The response?

Dombeck is facing intense and sustained attacks and threats of retaliation from corporate-funded politicians. Teddy Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot endured similar attacks nearly a century ago when they expanded the National Forest System to protect the public interest.

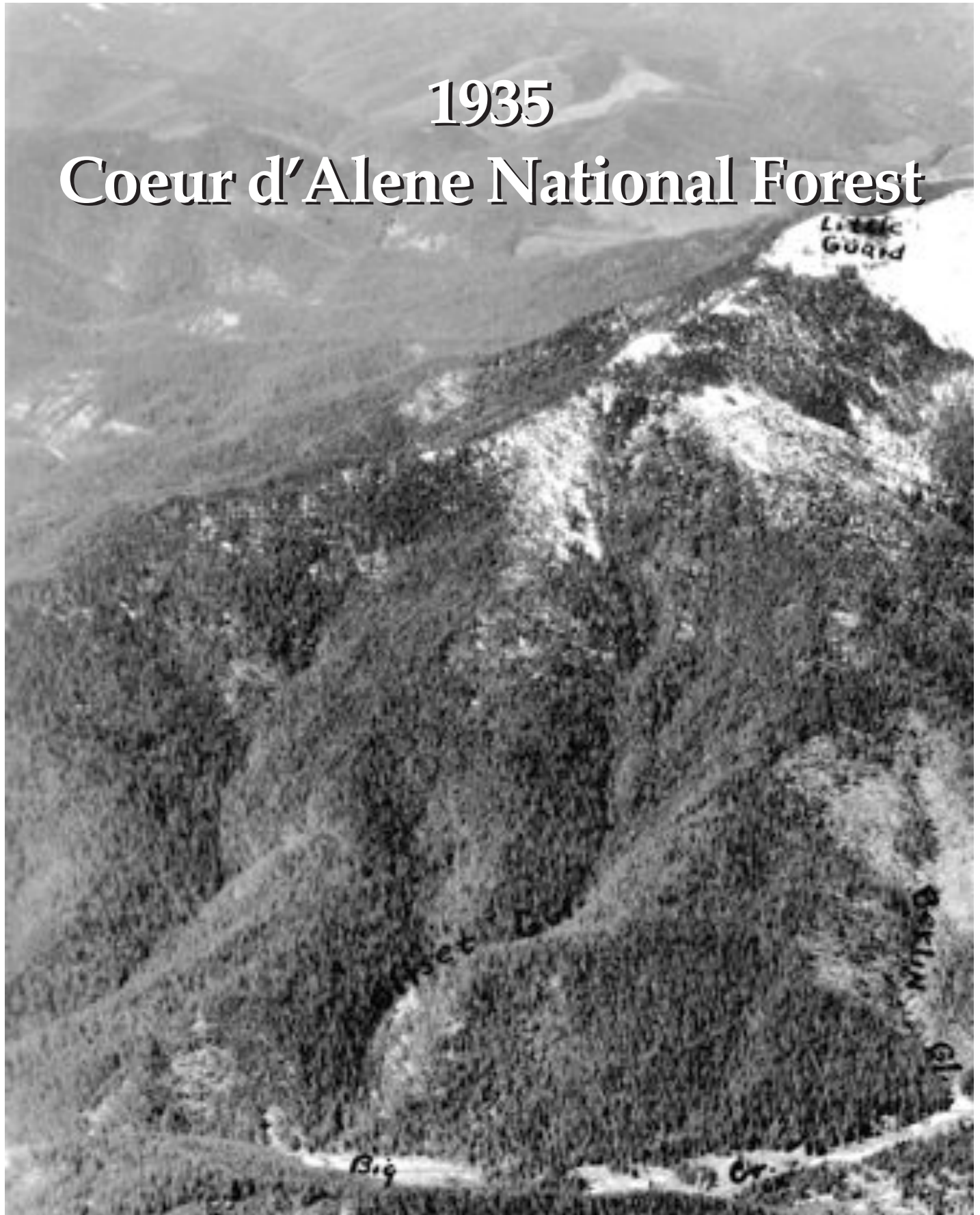
The top-down corporate pressure to cut continues to collide with the bottom-up realities in the National Forests. This is best illustrated by the Coeur d’Alene National Forest — the worst damaged of them all. Timber corporations and the Forest Service mined the green gold, stripping bare steep hillsides. Logging roads average 10.85 road miles to square mile of national forest land (exceeding 20 in some areas). The Coeur d’Alene National Forest has a total of 6000-8000 miles of roads, of which 3,000-5,000 are not even maintained. Floods expected every few centuries now occur every few years.

Senator Bryan used the destruction of the Coeur d’Alene to illustrate the need to end the road subsidy during the Senate debate last September. Perhaps in 1998 the Congress will hear him and understand the painful lessons of the Coeur d’Alene. Congress should support, not impede, efforts to restore America's National Forests.

*Congress should support
— not impede —
efforts to restore
America's National Forests*

1935 Coeur d'Alene National Forest

U.S. FOREST SERVICE





1997 Coeur d'Alene National Forest

© Trygve Steen

(1) Logging roads

Endless miles of national forest roads are falling apart

• It's the other side of the coin in debate over roadless areas

By Scott Sonner
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Western Republicans in Congress are in an uproar over the Clinton administration's proposal to stop building logging roads over tens of millions of acres of national forests.

But a bigger controversy is brewing over what to do with the more than 400,000 miles of existing national-forest roads. Fewer than half are maintained to proper standards, and many are literally falling apart.

"It's like the crazy aunt in the basement that nobody wants to talk about," said Chris Wood, special assistant to Forest Service Chief Mike Dombeck.

"We are up here on Capitol Hill regularly fighting over a \$47 million roads budget when we've got a \$10 billion maintenance backlog," he said in a recent interview.

"We've got to change the face of this debate to address the long-term needs and find a way to pay for them."

The poorly maintained system is accelerating soil erosion, contributing to landslides and disrupting normal flood cycles. All take their toll on wildlife habitat, especially that of troubled salmon and trout species that rely on cold clear water in national forest streams.

In his 1999 budget plan this past week, President Clinton proposed spending \$218 million — up 20 percent from 1998 — to remove and

rebuild logging roads and restore national-forest watersheds. The blueprint would nearly triple the annual amount of roads to be obliterated and replanted — from this year's 1,200 miles to 3,500 miles next year.

The plan comes on the heels of Dombeck's proposed 18-month moratorium on road-building in roadless areas of national forests that cover 5,000 acres or more. That move would effectively shut down timber harvests in roadless areas except for limited helicopter logging in some parts of the West and on several exempted forests in Oregon, Washington, Alaska and northern California.

The moratorium has drawn sharp criticism from several influential Republicans who could blunt the effort if not block it all together.

"I fully intend to lead the fight to defeat this special-interest proposal which was created by extremists in the national environmental organizations and the Clinton administration," said Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska, chairman of the House Resources Committee.

Among others lining up against it were Reps. Bob Smith, R-Ore., chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, and Helen Chenoweth, R-Idaho, chairman of the House Resources subcommittee on forest health; and Sens. Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and Slade Gorton, R-Wash., chairman of the Senate Appropriations interior subcommittee.

Sen. Gordon Smith, R-Ore., said he'll consider legislation to reverse what he fears could become "a big land grab" for preservationists, "a blank check to those groups who have never been satisfied."

Dombeck said the moratorium is needed while the agency gets a better grasp on the overall situation — a "timeout," as he described it in January.

Just 40 percent of the existing national forest roads are maintained to the engineering standards used in their construction, he said.

And in addition to the 373,000 miles of roads on the books, the agency discovered in recent months an additional 60,000 miles of "ghost roads" they hadn't known existed.

Estimated at \$5 billion just five years ago, projected road-repair and reconstruction needs have been doubled to \$10 billion as a result of a closer examination over the past six months.

"The system, in many respects, is falling apart," Deputy Agriculture Secretary James Lyons says.

Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, another critic of the administration's logging policies and chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources subcommittee on forests, said the numbers are news to him.

"We have seen no data from them except what we read in the papers," said Mark Rey, staff director for the subcommittee.



© Bill Haskins

Logging roads (and clearcuts) have caused hundreds of landslides in Idaho.

Failure to fully brief Congress on the needs before announcing the new policy undercuts the agency's requests for significant funding increases, Craig said.

"While we understand there are unmet road-repair needs, it is going to take more than press releases, private leaks, preservation group pandering and predictions of peril from the Forest Service before we are convinced they are serious about this," he said this past week.

Tom Mills, director of the Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Research Station in Portland, Ore., said he can attest to the need for repair to stem further habitat damage.

"We've been accumulating additional scientific information about the effects of roads for some time. What it shows is the ecological impact of roads turns out to be more extensive than we previously thought," Mills said.

"The bottom line is there clearly is enough scientific information to support the strategy the chief announced, to take a closer and more holistic look at road-management decisions," he said.

Dombeck said building a logging road "is a long-term commitment.

"It's not like you go in and come back out again. You have to maintain this road for decade after decade," he said.

"We've got to make sure the roads we are maintaining are needed and take those we don't need and decommission them and quit spending money on them."

Lyons said the Forest Service for decades "has treated roads as assets on their balance sheets.

"Well, they are assets all right, but they are depreciating assets. ... If you don't invest in those assets they begin costing you."

Dombeck said the moratorium on new road building would be felt most in Idaho, Montana and eastern Oregon. Chenoweth and Sen. Conrad



Burns, R-Mont., predicted thousands of timber jobs would be lost as a result.

But environmentalists say the overall economic impact would be positive.

"There is this mythology that the only employment on the national forests is logging. Most of the people who work in these roadless areas are wilderness outfitters and guides," said John Gatchell, conservation director of the Montana Wilderness Association in Helena, Mont.

"For them, construction of that road is the kiss of death. They cannot offer a quality experience in the back country if it is no longer back country."

Lewiston Tribune, Lewiston, Idaho, February 9, 1998

60,000 miles of forest roads found

By Scott Sonner
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Forest Service officials preparing a new logging and road-building policy have discovered in national forests thousands of miles of roads they didn't know existed. They now fear repairs may cost at least twice as much as expected.

The \$10 billion backlog in heavy maintenance and road reconstruction work is double the \$5 billion in repairs the service estimated were needed just five years ago, agency officials said Wednesday.

The recent discovery of an estimated 60,000 miles of "ghost roads" that previously had escaped the government's inventory may push the costs even higher, agency official told The Associated Press.

That's in addition to the 373,000 miles of national forest logging roads already on the books — eight times the length of the U.S. Interstate system.

The Forest Service has been reviewing the roads system since last summer when Assistant Agriculture Secretary James Lyons identified roads as the single biggest cause of ecological damage to national forests.

Agency officials now believe only about 40 percent of the roads are being maintained to the specifications they were built to — a deficiency contributing to accelerated soil erosion, landslides and other damage to forests and streams, the Forest Service official said.

The 60,000 miles of uninventoried roads "are bleeding sediment into streams," said the official, who asked not to be identified. They include everything from temporary, unmapped logging roads to recreational trails that have developed into roads through repeated use.

The agency plans to unveil a new policy soon to guide management of the roads system as well as the few remaining large tracts of national forests with no roads.

While most of the attention has focused on the Clinton administration's plan to impose a moratorium on logging in roadless areas, the Forest Service also intends to discuss the environmental damage caused by the network of existing roads.

The new policy will include an effort to remove unneeded roads and selectively upgrade others to reduce environmental degradation, the official said.

The \$10 billion maintenance backlog includes such things as repairing bridges and removing culverts damaged by floods.

The Idaho Statesman, January 22, 1998

Forest Service acknowledges taking a loss

Environmentalists say agency delayed releasing report pending logging road legislation

From wire reports

WASHINGTON — The Forest Service is acknowledging for the first time that taxpayers are losing money logging national forests.

A draft of a report due out next month says the government spent nearly \$15 million more on logging operations than private timber companies paid to purchase the 3.7 million board feet of timber in fiscal 1996.

"For the first time since we have reported such information, expenditures for the program as a whole exceeded revenues . . . by some \$14.7 million," Robert Joslin, deputy chief of the Forest Service, said in a copy of the draft obtained Friday by The Associated Press and the Washington Post.

"This pattern can be expected to continue in the future as we place more and more emphasis on using timber sales as a management tool for achieving objectives other than fiber production," he said.

Environmentalists charged that the agency actually reached the conclusion months ago but kept it secret while Congress debated and narrowly defeated proposals this fall to slow construction of logging roads.

"They've known this since March," said Michael Francis, a former congressional aide now at The Wilderness Society. "They have been sitting on the numbers for their own political reasons."

Forest Service officials denied that.

Environmentalists long have accused the Forest Service of using accounting tricks to hide the losses. For example, the Forest Service does not count as a cost the one-fourth of timber sale receipts that are returned to rural counties housing the forests. That amounted to \$240 million in 1996.

And the Forest Service doesn't count things like fire control or road maintenance.

Other government agencies and numerous environmental groups have long claimed that the government's timber program is a money-loser for taxpayers. A 1995 report by the General Accounting Office showed accumulative losses to the Treasury of nearly \$1 billion from 1992 to 1994. The Forest Service, however, has consistently shown a profit, in part because of accounting procedures that do not reflect revenue payments to states and other costs.

"The administration has taken a profitable program and made it unprofitable for the taxpayers," said Frank Stewart, spokesman for the industry's American Forest & Paper Association. He blamed it on "all the red tape this program has to go through."

Mark Rey, majority staff member for the Senate Energy and Natural Resources subcommittee on forests, said the Forest Service's reported losses underscore the need for streamlining the government's regulations.

While private landowners can reap tidy profits from selling timber rights, the government must bear the cost of intensive environmental reviews as well as administrative and legal appeals that can delay harvesting for months or even years, he said.

"These numbers do not make a commentary on whether the federal government should be selling timber," Rey said, "but rather they make a commentary on the efficiency with which the United States sells timber."

Robert Wolf, a retired forester and Congressional Research staffer, takes issue with blaming appeals.

"Appeal costs have been down the last couple of years because the salvage rider prohibited them," Wolf said. "And the GAO report showed that between 1992 and 1994, 47 of the national forests ate up all of the receipts even before counting congressional appropriations."

"How can it be appeals?"

The Spokesman-Review, November 22, 1997, Copyright 1997, *The Spokesman-Review*. Used with permission of *The Spokesman-Review*.

Sprunger

PAYMENT P-- SORRY, YOU OWE ME MONEY -- IT COSTS PLENTY TO DO THESE TIMBER SALES!

MIGOSH! -- I'M ACTUALLY PAYING THESE PEOPLE TO RIP OFF MY FORESTS, P



— BELOW COST TIMBER SALES —

(2) Congress, Campaign Contributions, and Timber Corporations

Seattle Times Editorial

Big Timber bucks pave way for logging roads

The flow of cash from Big Timber to the Beltway acts like a pesticide sprayed on fledgling attempts to end corporate welfare: It kills reform efforts dead.

According to Common Cause, the timber lobby poured more than \$8 million into political coffers since 1991 — including \$2.7 million in soft money to both the Republican and Democratic parties. The campaign gift-giving paid off for timber interests earlier this year, when lawmakers in both parties joined to preserve a three-decades-old government subsidy to build logging roads.

The roads are built on public lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service. Although the roads often are later used by the general public for forest access and recreation, the original intent is for private companies who harvest the trees. Logging roads are a key contributor to environmental degradation of streams and watersheds.

A few fiscal conservatives joined environmentalists in Congress in an effort to kill the road program, which has cost taxpayers \$458 million over the past six years. But they were no match for bipartisan pork preservationists, led by key members of Washington state's delegation.

Democratic Rep. Norm Dicks, who received \$37,350 in PAC money from timber since 1991, was instrumental in blocking attempts in the House to end the road purchaser credit program. Dicks ranks seventh-highest among House recipients of timber contributions. Republican Rep. Jennifer Dunn ranks fourth overall. Of the state's nine congressional representatives, only Seattle Democratic Rep. Jim McDermott, who received the least amount of timber money in the delegation (\$2,000 over six years), voted against continued road subsidies in the House.

Republican Sen. Slade Gorton, an erstwhile advocate of limited government, received \$78,529 in timber PAC money since 1991 — placing him third-highest on the list of Senate timber money men. Not only did Gorton spearhead the campaign to kill a Senate amendment to terminate the road program and trim the Forest Service road budget by \$10 million, he also led the successful effort to expand the giveaway. Final legislation got rid of a \$50-million cap on how much the Forest Service may give in timber credits to logging companies in 1998.

Both the money-givers and money-takers protest loudly against those who attack the road purchaser credit subsidies as corporate welfare. If the timber lobby is arguing its members don't benefit from the logging road program, why does the industry continue to fight so hard and spend so much to protect it?

Seattle Times, Seattle, Washington, December 20, 1997



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Senate rejects cuts in logging road funds

Idaho forests pointed out as what's wrong with current system

Gore could have made difference

By Ken Olsen, Staff writer

COEUR d'ALENE—An unlimited amount of national forest timber might be traded for logging road construction as a result of a key vote in the U.S. Senate on Wednesday.

While not the final word on how much the public should subsidize logging road construction, it is a victory for the timber industry, which argues that trading trees for roads is a smart and efficient way to build forest byways.

It is a narrow loss for an unusual coalition of fiscal conservatives and environmentalists, who sought to eliminate the \$50 million in public timber doled out per year in so-called "purchaser credits." Pushing an amendment offered by Sen. Richard Bryan, D-Nev., the coalition also wanted to erase \$10 million from the U.S. Forest Service's \$47.4 million direct cash outlay for additional logging roads.

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman supported the amendment, citing a Forest Service study showing that roads increase chances of landslides. U.S. Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., also pushed for the Bryan measure.

The Senate's initial vote was a 50-50 tie. As president of the Senate, Vice President Al Gore could have broken that tie had he not been in New York.

"If he was there, we would have won," said Marty Hayden of the Earth Justice Legal Defense Fund, formally known as the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund.

But with Gore absent, Bryan switched his vote to "no," leaving a 51-49 tally, so as to be recorded on the prevailing side and make a motion to reconsider the vote.

On the reconsideration, Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., dropped his support for the reduction in the road budget and the same tally resulted, 51-49.

That left Washington's other U.S. senator, Slade Gorton, victorious in his attempt to lift the ceiling on how many trees the U.S. Forest Service could

trade to timber companies for road construction. It has been capped at about \$50 million a year.

But the House limited purchaser credits to \$25 million next year. So when the bill goes to conference committee, "I doubt the House will go to zero very easily," said Marty Hayden, of the Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund.

The fund and other environmental groups are putting an optimistic face on the vote. "I'm looking at nine Republicans, several pretty conservative, that went with us on this," Hayden said.

"I think it was remarkable we were able to come within a hair," added Jim Jontz of the Western Ancient Forest Campaign.

Idaho's national forests came up in the debate Wednesday. Bryan cited the high road densities on the Idaho Panhandle National Forest and the nearly 1,000 polluted streams in Idaho in arguing for the amendment.

The Forest Service itself has said, "the number one water quality problem in national forests is roads," Bryan said. "This amendment . . . eliminates a subsidy used primarily by the timber companies that not only has negative consequences for the taxpayers but a detrimental effect on the environment."

The Bureau of Land Management and several states successfully sell timber without the trees-for-roads swap, he said. And one Forest Service study shows the agency has overestimated road construction costs as much as 30 percent when figuring how many logs to give timber companies.

Bryan's amendment also provided money for counties whose share of timber receipts potentially would be reduced by the elimination of purchaser credits. County governments receive 25 percent of the timber sale proceeds as long as that figure exceeds what it normally receives under the Payment in Lieu of (Property) Taxes program.

U.S. Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, had harsh words for Bryan. He predicted the elimination of purchaser credits would be a disaster for Idaho, Washington and Oregon.

Paying the counties an equivalent amount of money to what they would lose from the Bryan amendment, "is ill-conceived and won't meet the counties' long-term need for economic diversity and stability," Craig said.

"This amendment does nothing more than carry out the agenda of the extreme wing of the environmental community," Craig said. In addition, purchaser credits provides money to keep roads from sliding into creeks.

Craig blasted the administration for continually changing its position on the issue. And he said small business will be hurt the most by the elimination of the program.

Nationwide, however, large companies appear to reap most of the benefits from purchaser credits. In 1996, for example, Ketchikan Pulp — a subsidiary of Louisiana Pacific, Sierra Pacific Industries and Boise Cascade received \$14 million of the \$40 million in purchaser credits.

• The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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Road credits in local forests

Top five local National Forest recipients of purchaser road credits from the U.S. Forest Service in 1987 and 1996, and value of those credits (where available).

Colville NF

(1987 dollar amounts not available; only two recipients in 1996)

1987

- 1: Vaagen Brothers
- 2: Boise Cascade
- 3: Plum Creek Timber Co.
- 4: Louisiana-Pacific Corp.
- 5: Riley Creek Lumber Co.

1996

- 1: Vaagen Brothers, \$1.5 million
- 2: Omak Wood Products, \$82,000

Idaho Panhandle NF

1987

- 1: Pottlatch Corp., \$770,306
- 2: Idaho Forest Industries, \$768,474
- 3: Louisiana Pacific, \$638,288
- 4: DAW (now Crown: Pacific), \$430,644
- 5: WI (now Crown Pacific), \$243,115

1996

- 1: Idaho Forest Industries, \$301,386
- 2: Crown Pacific, \$55,694
- 3: Wescor, \$53,908
- 4: Louisiana Pacific, \$47,176
- 5: JAG Inc., \$16,820

Kootenai NF

1987

- 1: Stoltze Lumber Co., \$432,126
- 2: Louisiana Pacific Corp., \$385,961
- 3: WI, \$359,543
- 4: Border Lumber, \$336,057
- 5: Truman Logging Inc., \$153,769

1996

- 1: Owens and Hurst, \$1.02 million
- 2: Plum Creek, \$381,972
- 3: Foust, \$157,150
- 4: American Timber, \$143,237
- 5: Stimson, \$105,514

Clearwater NF

1987

- 1: Pottlatch Corp., \$947,400
- 2: Bennett Lumber Products, \$415,616
- 3: Triple R Forest Products, \$242,974
- 4: Kooskia Inc., \$101,801
- 5: Pyramid Mountain, \$16,354

1996

- 1: Three Rivers Timber Inc., \$585,327
- 2: Bennett Lumber Products, \$55,845
- 3: Clearwater Forest Industries, \$46,184
- 4: Empire Lumber Co., \$21,930
- 5: Pyramid Mountain, \$17,649

SOURCE U.S. Forest Service

Cash paves the way for timber industry

Group says \$8 million in contributions sustained road program

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Millions of dollars in campaign contributions from the timber industry helped doom proposals in Congress this year to cut off spending for construction of logging roads in national forests, Common Cause said Tuesday.

The more than \$8 million in contributions since 1991 includes a significant increase the past two years in "soft money" checks given to the Democratic and Republican parties, which then transfer money to individual candidates, said the nonprofit consumer watchdog group.

The industry also reported \$2.9 million in lobbying expenses for the first six months of 1997, more than triple the \$840,000 spent by environmental groups that tried unsuccessfully to eliminate the Forest Service's road purchaser-credit program, the group said.

"What happened to the road-credit program in 1997 was an outrageous demonstration of the power of big money on public policy," said Common Cause's president, Ann McBride.

"Timber interests tripled their soft-money spending in 1995-96, a move that seemed to help them gain leverage with Congress despite the environmental concerns of the overwhelming majority of Americans," she said.

Senators who in September voted down an amendment to cut off the roads spending received an average of \$27,337 in contributions since 1991 from the American Forest & Paper Association and the political action committees of its member companies, Common Cause said.

That amendment, offered by Sen. Richard Bryan, D-Nev., failed on a 51-49 vote. A similar House measure failed 211-209.

AFPA and membership PACs contributed \$5.6 million directly to candidates from January 1991 through June 1997, Common Cause said in the new report, "Carrying a Big Stick: How Big Timber Triumphs in Washington."

The industry gave \$1.5 million in soft money to parties in 1995-1996 — up from \$481,960 in 1993-94 and \$345,120 in 1991-92, the report said.

Environmental groups fighting the logging roads gave no soft money during the period. Only three have PACs — the Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth and the League of Conservation Voters.

They contributed \$2.8 million to candidates from June 1991 through June 1997, Common Cause said — half of the industry total.

Critics of the road-credit program say it amounts to a subsidy for the timber industry, reimbursing companies for the cost of building roads to timber sales with credits they can use to bid on new timber sales.

American Forest & Paper Association spokesman Frank Stewart said Tuesday the trade group was reviewing the report.

Its president, W. Henson Moore, has said previously that the program is the cheapest and most efficient way to construct the roads.

He says they are used for fighting fires, recreation and local traffic as well as logging.

Sen. Gordon Smith, R-Ore., who received more than \$360,000 in timber PAC money during the six-year period — more than any other member of Congress — is among those who argue the roads are necessary to help increase Pacific Northwest timber production.

Logging on national forests in Oregon, Washington, Oregon and Northern California has dropped to less than 1 billion board feet a year, compared to annual averages in excess of 4 billion board feet during the 1980s.

The Spokesman-Review, December 17, 1997, Copyright 1997, *The Spokesman-Review*. Used with permission of *The Spokesman-Review*.

Top American Forest & Paper Association

PAC and Soft Money Contributors 1991-1997

	Democrats	Republicans	Total
International Paper	\$ 54,200	\$ 992,861	\$ 1,047,061
Georgia-Pacific	301,755	727,250	1,029,005
Stone Container	46,000	647,450	693,450
Westvaco	511,000	601,450	1,112,450
Gilman Paper	519,600	22,100	541,700
Champion International	185,398	353,904	539,302
Proctor & Gamble/Buckeye Cell	153,825	365,950	519,775
Weyerhaeuser	95,215	415,619	510,834
Willamette Industries	19,800	291,876	311,676
Union Camp	31,950	256,315	288,265
Alabama R. Pulp/Parsons & Whittemore	280,000	-	280,000
Am Forest & Pulp Assoc	52,620	214,705	267,325
Mead	43,850	171,400	215,250
Boise Cascade	20,500	182,000	202,500
Visy/Pratt Industries	85,000	105,000	190,000
Simpson Timber	28,000	158,350	186,350
Potlatch	49,350	136,616	185,966
SD Warren/Scott Paper	37,000	122,553	159,553
Total	\$2,094,513	\$5,674,949	\$7,769,462

Note: AF&PA and its members gave a total of \$8.4 million: \$5.6 million in PAC, and \$2.4 million in soft money, from 1991 through June 1997.

Recipients of US Forest Service Road Credit Subsidies, 1991-1997

Sierra Pacific Industries	\$20,314,336
Boise Cascade	18,894,511
Willamette Industries	8,777,755
Weyerhaeuser	7,460,715
Stone Container	5,260,687
Plum Creek Timber	4,648,460
Potlatch	4,172,731
Hi-Ridge Lumber	3,791,097
Champion International	3,595,788
Shearer Lumber	3,352,075
Idaho Forest Products	3,158,869
Sierra Forest Products	3,116,610
Georgia-Pacific	2,950,039
Pacific Lumber	1,988,627
Bradford Forest Products	1,979,107
Bibler Brothers	1,940,830
International Paper	1,849,436
Stimson Lumber	1,239,055
SDS Lumber	1,092,464
Total	\$99,583,192

Note: AF&PA members received more than \$100 million in national forest discounts during the period.

Source: Common Cause, 1997, *Carrying a Big Stick: How Big Timber Triumphs in Washington*.
Compiled by George Draffan, Public Information Network, PO Box 95316, Seattle WA 98145-2316 USA,
e-mail pin@igc.org, reference SUBSIDY.XLS, Sheet2, Sheet1, 3/27/98

March 21, 1997

An Open Letter to Larry Craig

Dear Senator Craig:

March 21, 1997

In 1976, the National Forest Management Act was passed to end clearcut abuses of our public forests. Two decades later our national forests are a ravaged landscape gouged by continued clearcutting and road building. Somehow, somewhere, between the marbled halls of Congress and the line officers of the Forest Service, something got twisted.

Who would do such a thing?
Who could have profited from stripping our forests of their health — and their wealth?

*there is an appearance
of impropriety here . . .*

Not the loggers and millworkers left behind by companies that mined Idaho's forests for timber dollars and then exported their dollars and jobs to other parts of the globe. **Not the salmon** trying to find a spawning bed now choked with logging-caused sediment. **Not the families** driven from their homes by landslides and floodwaters caused by stripping the headwaters bare of their trees.

Who profits? The timber industry.

In the 1996 election cycle the **Craig campaign received \$107,791 in contributions directly traceable to the timber industry.** The campaign received **an additional \$174,123 cash and "in-kind" contributions** of "soft" money given to the Republican party and then spent on your behalf (Federal Election Commission records).

That was 1996. This is 1997.

On March 25 you are holding a Senate **workshop in Coeur d'Alene** on your **proposed legislation to change the management of our national forests.** The draft bill is remarkably **similar to suggestions presented** to your Senate committee **by timber-**

industry lawyer Steven Quarles last year during the height of your re-election campaign.

Senator Craig, **there is an appearance of impropriety here** that does no justice to those who may support your legislation. In politics, appearances can very quickly become reality. **There is a simple way to raise your legislation above the allegations.**

Give back the timber money.

Show the people of Idaho that you represent them, not the timber corporations. Say clearly to the nation that Larry Craig is a man who knows the difference between the public interest and a corporate interest.

We'll be in Coeur d'Alene on the 25th to hear your answer.

Sincerely,

Inland Empire Public Lands Council

Paid for by the Inland Empire Public Lands Council, a forest conservation organization.

Craig unapologetic for taking timber money

• Idaho senator dismisses environmentalists' request that he return \$107,000 in campaign contributions from industry

By Scott Sonner
Associated Press

WASHINGTON—Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, is proud of his support from timber companies and won't grant an environmental group's request he return \$107,000 in campaign contributions from the industry, his spokesman said Friday.

"Senator Craig doesn't apologize for receiving contributions from groups that provide jobs and incomes for families and hundreds of western communities," said the Idaho Republican's spokesman, Michael Franzen.

The Inland Empire Public Lands Council of Spokane took out an ad in Friday editions of The Idaho Statesman newspaper in Boise urging Craig to return \$107,791 he received from industry during the 1996 election cycle.

"Give back the timber money. Show the people of Idaho that you represent them, not the timber corporations," the ad said.

Craig, chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources subcommittee on forestry, will be in Coeur d'Alene Tuesday for the last in a series of congressional workshops on his draft legislation to rewrite forest-management laws.

Environmentalists say his rewrite of the National Forest Management Act and National Environmental Policy Act would erode protection of fish and wildlife and accelerate logging on federal lands.

The newspaper ad said Craig's draft bill is "remarkably similar" to a long list of legal changes suggested by timber industry lobbyists in recent testimony before Congress.

"Senator Craig, there is an appearance of impropriety here that does no justice to those who may support your legislation," the nonprofit council said.

The ad said a review of records at the Federal Election Commission showed Craig received \$46,500 from timber-related political action committees and another \$61,291 in contributions over \$200 each from individuals associated with the timber industry from 1991-96.

"The linkage they are trying to imply doesn't exist," Franzen said.

Craig is working actively to gather input on his legislation from a broad variety of groups, including environmentalists, the spokesman said.

A number of the changes in forest-management law suggested by the timber industry have been echoed by the Western States Governors Association and the General Accounting Office, the auditing arm of Congress, Franzen said.

If the Inland Empire Public Lands Council is implying that political contributions buy access to Congress, timber industry officials should be complaining because they are only getting 50 percent of the agenda time at workshops on the bill, he said.

"The environmentalists have not contributed anything to Senator Craig and they are getting the other half," Franzen said.

Lewiston Tribune, Lewiston, Idaho, March 22, 1997

The Atlanta Constitution *Editorial*

The fox guarding America's forests

U.S. Sen. Larry Craig of Idaho gets down-right offended when the federal government dares to interfere with the God-given right to rape and pillage the environment. He is an ardent foe of the Endangered Species Act and the Environmental Protection Agency, and has long argued for a much more aggressive approach to clear-cutting our national forests.

A couple of years ago, Craig even tried to disarm all federal game wardens, national park rangers and Forest Service law-enforcement personnel, claiming that Americans were frightened by what he called "the increasing presence of an armed federal entity." Of course, without guns those officials could not hope to enforce the law on federal lands, which was exactly Craig's intent.

Now, Craig has been named chairman of the Senate Task Force on the Environment. From that position, he is already launching a new effort to gut environmental protection of our national forests. He has proposed a 28-point rewrite of the laws that govern logging on federal land, and most of those points echo the proposals being advanced by the timber industry.

The end result of Craig's "reform" would be to accelerate the clear-cutting of federal property, even if it causes environmental

harm. It's also important to note that on many federal timber sales, the U.S. Treasury ends up losing money. Taxpayers literally subsidize the destruction of their own forests.

That means higher taxes and a bigger budget deficit. It also puts the owners of private timber land, such as those in Georgia, at a significant and unfair disadvantage. They find it hard to compete against companies that harvest subsidized timber from publicly owned lands.

For the past couple of years, congressional Republicans have allowed people such as Craig to set their party's position on environmental issues, and they've taken a terrific beating for doing so. Last year, national Republican leaders indicated that they had learned their lesson and would now be much more protective of the environment.

Craig isn't making it any easier for them.

Atlanta, Georgia, February 5, 1997

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Craig critic doesn't speak softly

Teddy's granddaughter critical of timber plan

By Ken Olsen, Staffwriter

COEUR d'ALENE—With the beat of the Tubbs Hill logging helicopter reverberating through the hotel wall behind her, Teddy Roosevelt's granddaughter Monday chastised Idaho Sen. Larry Craig for plans to rewrite federal forest management laws.

"Almost 100 years ago a very wise and far-sighted president set aside 17 million acres of public land, which means it belongs to you and to me," said Edith Williams of her grandfather, president from 1901 to 1909. "He set up the proper agencies to protect these lands."

Since those historic days, however, the national forests have been under a logging assault that has increased flooding, ruined trout streams, and erased species, she said.

"The great work that Teddy Roosevelt tried to do is being flagrantly and wantonly destroyed," Williams said.

"This ravage of our forests must be stopped."

Williams, who lives in Western Washington, was speaking as part of a panel at The Coeur d'Alene Resort organized by the Inland Empire Public Lands Council. It's a preamble to today's workshop at North Idaho College on Craig's 100-page draft legislation. It is the fifth workshop on the measure.

Later in the day, Mark Rey of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee spoke just as strongly about the need for Craig's proposal and about the overwhelming support for the measure.

Craig held 15 hearings during the last session of Congress and found "no one was satisfied with the status quo management of federal forest lands," Rey said. "By and large, the dissatisfaction was both profound and universal."

The result is, "We are spending more money for less-satisfying results," Rey said.

The legislation is a draft, Craig is open to making changes and there are several planned, Rey said. "This is a work in progress." He declined to detail those changes, saying he wanted to wait to discuss those with Craig after today's hearing.

Craig often has called the Forest Service a dysfunctional agency and says he is trying to streamline the appeals and planning process to return the agency to better days of efficient management.

If there is consensus that national forest management

needs repair, there was little agreement in Coeur d'Alene on Monday about the method of repair.

Win Green, former supervisor of the Clearwater National Forest in Idaho and the Tongass National Forest in Alaska, also was at the Lands Council press conference. The Craig bill "is an idea whose time should not come, not now, not ever," Green said.

He acknowledged some problems with the current laws, but fine tuning, not throwing out the current laws, is the solution, he said. What's broken is the ability of people to accept forest plans and environmental safeguards that get in the way of harvest.

One key feature of the Craig proposal is allowing states to apply for the right to manage, and eventually take control, of federal lands. Each state would have to receive Congressional approval.

States manage about the same amount of land as the Forest Service and BLM, for significantly less expense and for four times the fiscal return, said Rey, a former timber industry lobbyist. Simultaneously, their management is as sensitive to the environment as what's done on federal forests, he said.

Critics couldn't disagree more. Most state constitutions require that state lands be managed for maximum financial return.

"I think (Teddy Roosevelt) would be outraged," Williams said. "He set those lands aside for everybody, they weren't just for one state."

Green sees the transfer to states as the first step in transferring the land to the timber companies. Meanwhile, "Craig just wants to flat exclude 99 percent of the American public from having a say in how their forests are managed and he wants to do that by giving them to the state," Green said.

***"The great work that Teddy Roosevelt tried to do is being flagrantly and wantonly destroyed,"
— Edith Roosevelt Williams***



*Old Mother Heyburn went to the cupboard,
To get her poor dog a bone,
When she go there, the cupboard was bare.
And so the poor dog had none.
To Mr Pinchot - compliments W C Moore*

*The Spokesman-Review, March 25, 1997, Copyright 1997,
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Spokesman-Review.*

Boise Cascade promises profit

CEO says restructured paper division should strengthen company against weak prices

By John Tucker, The Idaho Statesman

Boise Cascade Corp. shareholders elected two new directors Friday, and were assured by executives that profits would resume soon.

Chief Executive Officer George Harad has said previously that Boise Cascade would start earning money again by the end of this year.

But Harad did not repeat that specific promise during the forest products company's annual shareholders meeting at the Boise convention center.

On Monday, Boise Cascade reported a \$15.2 million first-quarter loss, largely because of weak paper prices.

The shareholders also voted down proposals that would declassify the board of directors and force the company to incorporate in Idaho.

Gary Michael, chairman and chief executive officer of Albertson's Inc., and Philip Carroll, a director of Shell Oil Co., were elected to the board.

Michael and Carroll will fill seats vacated by former U.S. Sen. Jim McClure and Robert Coleman. McClure and Coleman retired Friday.

Harad said Boise Cascade is restructuring its paper division in order to make the company more profitable during periods of weak prices.

"Boise Cascade's business mix and competitive position are changing fundamentally," Harad said.

"The changes that are happening are being done to ensure Boise Cascade will be profitable through both the highs and the lows of the business cycle," Harad said.

Harad referred to a decision made last year to make more uncoated free sheet paper, shift some production to value-added paper grades and further its integration with Boise Cascade Office Products Corp.

Boise Cascade Office Products and Boise Cascade's building products division are profitable and growing rapidly, Harad said.

Shareholders who belong to the United Food and Commercial Workers Union sought a majority vote to declassify the board. A declassified board would run for election every

year, instead of staggered elections every three years.

"There is a direct link between the board of directors and the company's financial performance," said a UCFW member who addressed the meeting.

But the union's objective was actually designed to pressure Michael.

The UFCW is embroiled in a dispute with Albertson's over what it says are unfair labor practices.

John Osborn, a Spokane physician, asked the shareholders to reincorporate the company in Idaho.

Boise Cascade should be accountable to the people of Idaho when decisions the company makes have bad outcomes, Osborn said.

He also said Boise Cascade was spending too much money in the political arena — money meant to influence political decisions on federal timber sales.

John Osborn said Boise Cascade was spending too much money in the political arena — money meant to influence political decisions on federal timber sales.

The shareholders nixed both proposals.

After the meeting, Boise Cascade announced a regular quarterly dividend of 15 cents per share. The dividend will be paid July 15 to shareholders of record on July 1.

The Idaho Statesman, Boise, Idaho, April 19, 1997



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(3) Editorials from around the Nation

The Seattle Times

Taxpayers shouldn't subsidize logging roads

Congressional representatives from the Pacific Northwest have a green and golden opportunity tomorrow to do right by the environment and the economy: Vote to end federal subsidies for logging roads.

This is a no-brainer for taxpayers-rights activists, conservative budget hawks and environmentalists. If private timber companies are going to profit from activities on public lands, they should pay all the associated costs — including the costs of road construction.

Under the current U.S. Forest Service program, the government essentially trades trees for roads. In exchange for credits used in bidding for federal timber, the Forest Service subsidizes the cost of building logging roads for private firms.

Vested interests on both the left and right are fighting to preserve this long unchallenged piece of corporate welfare. They argue it isn't a giveaway. But the U.S. General Accounting Office confirmed that both timber companies and recreational users are being subsidized unfairly by general taxpayers for the use of those roads.

The amendment to a spending bill before the House this week would bar some \$50 million in federal money for new

logging roads. Shutting down this wasteful program permanently, as both GOP House Budget Committee chairman John Kasich of Ohio and consumer advocate Ralph Nader proposed in February, could result in savings of nearly \$100 million over the next five years.

Washington state Democrat Norm Dicks, a member of the House Appropriations Committee, worries that "this assault on the roads programs is unwarranted and misunderstood." A bigger worry is the assault on the environment that the roads program has waged for years. The network of subsidized logging roads — now over 380,000 miles — has disturbed wildlife and caused soil erosion. The White House Council on Economic Advisers concluded earlier this year that the policies "facilitate development and exploitation of natural resources."

Some Washington state congressional representative remain undecided about this vote. Their uncertainty is unfathomable. So rarely, after all, do principles of fiscal conservatism and responsible environmentalism converge in a single piece of legislation as clearly as they do here. Get off the fence, folks, and tell the timber companies to hit the road — on their own dime.

Seattle, Washington, July 9, 1997

Los Angeles Times

Those Pricey Back Roads

Taxpayers subsidies to logging companies that cut roads through federal forests have proven fiscally wasteful and environmentally destructive. Bipartisan legislation scheduled to come before the House today would end this federal giveaway. It's time to do so.

More than 380,000 miles of dirt logging roads already web the nation's forests. That's enough to circle the earth nearly 15 times. In some parts of the Northwest, one square mile of forest is laced with up to 20 miles of road.

Timber companies that purchase federal forest parcels at auction win not only the right to log trees but also to cut these access roads. Under existing law, the companies then deduct the cost of road building from their payments to the Treasury. Taxpayers give back close to \$50 million a year under this arrangement. In addition, the federal government is responsible

for maintaining all these roads, and that cost rises with every new mile cut.

The public and the forests lose in other ways as well from this industry subsidy. Roads channel storm water, eroding land and dumping rock and soil into stream beds. As surrounding trees are cut, the risk of flooding increases, destroying watersheds and habitat for fish and wildlife.

An amendment to a bill funding the U.S. Forest Service would eliminate the logger's credit for road building; timber companies should rightly bear the cost. The government would maintain these roads. Perhaps without the giveaway, the backlog of road repair could be reduced and watershed destruction slowed in some forests.

Los Angeles, California, July 10, 1997

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Denver Post

Don't subsidize timber . . .

Congress should end the timber industry's road-building subsidies.

Recently, U.S. Reps. John Porter, R-Ill., and Joe Kennedy, D-Mass., tried to amend an appropriation bill to stop the U.S. Forest Service from paying for new logging roads. The House passed a watered-down version of their proposal, but didn't end the subsidy.

However, Sen. Richard Bryan, D-Nev., plans to offer an amendment in the Senate to stop the timber road subsidies. His proposal would end a purchaser credit program and strike a line item for road building from the Forest Service's budget.

Colorado's two U.S. senators, Wayne Allard and Ben Nighthorse Campbell, should support Bryan's effort.

Bryan's amendment would save the taxpayers about \$52 million a year, but the other principles involved loom even larger.

When the U.S. Forest Service sells timber from the national forests, it gives logging companies credit for the costs of building roads into those sale areas. The government thus gets less money for its trees than the trees are worth, thereby short-changing taxpayers.

Over the decades, the shortfalls have amounted to hundreds of millions of dollars.

Other industries that take public resources from federal lands — such as oil and gas companies — pay for their own roads. The timber industry shouldn't get preferential treatment.

While the timber industry says its roads become assets for the Forest Service, the fact is the roads often become headaches. They encourage more vehicle traffic, which disturbs wildlife; require

bigger maintenance budgets; and, in the worst cases, degrade water quality and lead to land slides. In the Pacific Northwest, logging roads frequently go nowhere except to heaps of slash and other timbering debris.

The purchaser credit program also encourages logging companies to cut in the so-called ancient or old-growth forests. Very often, these areas are so remote that timber companies would not consider cutting the trees if they had to pay the full road-building costs themselves.

Ending the subsidies will affect some Colorado companies because there are at least four pending timber sales on national forests here that would require new road construction.

But unlike the Pacific Northwest's logging giants, Colorado's relatively small timber industry doesn't cut much on old-growth stands.

Colorado companies instead work mostly in places that already have been logged once, which are known as second-growth forests. For the most part, Colorado's timber companies use existing roads to reach the trees they want to cut.

In essence, the road subsidies dip into taxpayers' wallets to encourage logging giants to cut where they shouldn't — but they do little to help small companies that are working in less controversial areas.

Allard and Campbell — who claim to be deficit hawks — surely can support the fiscally and environmentally responsible amendment that Bryan plans to offer.

Denver, Colorado, July 28, 1997

Chattanooga Free Press

Let Them Pay Their Way

The federal government owns lots of land throughout our country, for many good reasons, and some not so good.

Some of the land is used for national parks. Some of it is used for other varied governmental purposes. Much of it is simply reserved for conservation.

It makes sense for some of the products available from federal land to be used. For example, harvesting timber from some of the forests is good for the forests and good for our citizens who need the lumber that is produced.

In other areas, some mining is reasonable.

Grasslands may constructively be leased to ranchers for the grazing of cattle and sheep.

In winter-cold mountainous area, some land is leased out for use as recreational ski trails.

All such uses make sense. But each private use of public lands ought to pay for itself. Taxpayers in general should not be required to help finance the benefits that private interests obtain from using federal lands.

This is an issue expected to bring a vote in the United States Senate, perhaps tomorrow, on what is called the Bryan Amendment. Named for sponsoring Sen. Richard Bryan, D-Nev., the amendment

is designed to eliminate \$41.5 million of taxpayers' money from proposed Interior Department spending to finance construction of new logging roads in national forests.

Private logging in national forests makes sense when it is carried out in constructive ways that are environmentally and economically sound. It provides products our people need, creates jobs, improves forests in some instances and helps reduce the danger of destructive fires. But when loggers are given harvesting rights, they should expect to pay reasonable fees for that privilege, certainly covering the full costs of their operations without passing on to taxpayers the expense of building roads to make timber accessible.

It may be hard to conceive, but there are already about 378,000 miles of roads in national forests. The government should not have to build more roads at taxpayers' expense just to serve commercial interests. Let them build their own roads, where appropriate, as part of the cost of their businesses.

Whether for logging, mining, pasturing, skiing or other private uses of public lands, each operation ought to pay its full costs, with some money left over for the U.S. Treasury.

There should be no taxpayer-provided subsidies.

Chattanooga, Tennessee, September 15, 1997

The Salt Lake Tribune

No More Forest Roads

How green is this Congress? A telling clue may come as early as today with a House vote on an amendment to cut funding for the construction of new logging roads through U.S. Forest Service land. This measure, which barely failed last year, merits passage.

A year ago, Rep. Joseph Kennedy, D-Mass., offered an amendment to the Interior appropriations bill that would have cut \$42 million in funds for USFS road construction. The vote on the measure was 211-211, a tie spelling defeat; it had actually passed by one vote the day before.

The real story, though, was that the vote was so close. A similar amendment had failed by a wide margin in July 1995, when the Republican House was riding its anti-regulation wave. But after a year of being chastened as anti-environment, the same House nearly passed the Kennedy amendment last June, producing that tie vote. Now, having gone through an election campaign in which they were vulnerable on environmental issues, it will be instructive to see how House Republicans — with new members like Utah's Merrill Cook and Chris Cannon — come out on the logging-roads issue this time.

The Kennedy amendment, cosponsored by Illinois Republican John Porter, deserves that one extra vote for passage because it is not merely a pro-environment bill; it also has an anti-corporate welfare dimension, in that the federal road-building dollars represent a subsidy for the timber industry. Thus, the amendment will appeal to budget-tightening Republicans who cannot justify such subsidies.

But the environmental argument for the Kennedy amendment is equally persuasive: Logging roads through USFS land have been blamed for contributing to environmental degradation, namely some of the landslides in recent Northwest floods. And it makes little sense for Congress to appropriate funds to build even more of these roads, when there are already nearly 380,000 miles of USFS roads (11,609 in Utah), and the Forest Service is terribly backlogged now in its attempt to maintain them.

This amendment is a modest forest-protection measure, with a corporate welfare kick to it. If it cannot generate the extra vote from the 105th Congress that it could not get in the 104th — perhaps from Cook or Cannon — then it may be a signal that House Republicans have not fully absorbed the pro-environment message the voters gave them last fall.

Salt Lake City, Utah, July 10, 1997

The Atlanta Journal

End welfare for timbering

A vote to continue or end corporate welfare for timber interests will be cast this week on the floor of the House of Representatives. We hope members of the state's delegation will take the fiscally conservative side and vote to end unnecessary taxpayer subsidy to large timber companies.

An amendment to the Interior Appropriations bill would eliminate taxpayer funding of roads needed for logging on national forest lands. It would not end timbering on public land, though it might properly discourage expensive and environmentally damaging road-building in areas where logging, except for the subsidy, wouldn't be worth it. The Forest Service has allowed taxpayers to fund 377,000 miles of roads for timber projects — with costs camouflaged in the form of credits to the companies for additional timber.

The amendment's sponsors are as diverse as conservative budget committee chairman Rep. John Kasich (R-Ohio) and liberal Rep. Joseph Kennedy (D-Mass). A similar amendment

that would have saved \$42 million in last year's budget actually passed the House by one vote, only to be reversed on a parliamentary maneuver the next day — thanks to some heavy industry lobbying.

We think timbering on national forest lands is a legitimate activity if carried out in an environmentally sound and cost-efficient manner. Much of it is done that way. If responsible timber interests want to continue logging on public lands, they ought to see that hidden subsidies aren't going to help their case as they compete with a growing recreating and environmental lobby.

But one thing ought to be clear on the amendment: It's not just environmentalists who support it, it's fiscal conservatives too.

Atlanta, Georgia, July 8, 1997

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USA Today

Timber! Let subsidies fall

Congress this week will try again to end the ridiculous practice of paying loggers millions to build roads.

More than 100 years ago, in 1891, Congress created the National Forest Reserve as a means of protecting the nation's woodlands and increasingly muddied watersheds from the scouring clear-cuts inflicted by the 19th century timber industry.

Like many good resource-management ideas in those bad old robber-baron days, the protections didn't last long. In 1897, Congress voted to permit logging in the reserves, and the ensuing swarm of timber industry payouts and subsidies continues to finagle taxpayer dollars today. Among the most egregious: a program through which taxpayers spend millions of dollars a year to build roads that logging companies use to harvest cut-rate federal timber.

There is much to complain about when it comes to timber sales, which routinely cost the Treasury hundreds of millions of dollars a year. But the issue at hand is far narrower. For the second year running, a bipartisan congressional alliance of environmentalists and budget hawks will try Thursday to end the road-building subsidy, valued this year at \$41 million in direct costs. Last year's effort failed on a tie vote.

More power to them. The program survives on spurious rationales.

Supporters say the roads open the forest to recreation. But have you ever tried driving on one? When they are passable at all, they usually lead to vast fields of deadwood and slash, hardly places that invite picnicking or other pleasures. Moreover, the roads contribute to runoff that ruins fishing streams. Or isn't fishing a recreation?

And it's not as though we don't have enough roads already. The national forests are latticed by 377,000 miles of roads, almost nine times the length of the interstate highway system. In some places, there may be 20 miles of road per square mile of forest, as dense as some cities.

Does the road-building subsidy have economic importance? Hard to see how. The national forests account for only about 4% of the nation's timber production, hardly enough to affect prices or jobs. Other factors are far more influential. Between 1950 and 1994, the timber harvest increased by 64%, while employment in the wood and paper industries fell 4%.

Fact is, the road-building subsidy is an anachronism, a fossil from the last century when federal policy was aimed not at managing resources but rather enhancing economic development and westward expansion. Well, times change. The railroads now stretch from sea to sea. The land has been tamed. Let the timber industry pay its own way, or at least for its own roads.

July 9, 1997

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Cleveland Plain Dealer

It's clear-cut corporate welfare

It's not often that left-leaning environmentalists and budget-slashing conservatives can find common ground, so it's worth asking why one such alliance has formed over the issue of federal subsidies for road construction in national forests.

Each year, the U.S. Forest Service, which manages the national forests, spends about \$100 million to build and rebuild logging roads. About half goes for costs incurred directly by the government, and half to give generous credits to timber companies that build their own roads. More than 377,000 miles of roads have been built, enough to circle the globe about 15 times.

So expensive is this program that it more than offsets the fees paid by timber companies that log public land. According to the General Accounting Office, the nonpartisan auditing arm of Congress, the timber sale program lost nearly \$1 billion between 1992 and 1994. This fact — which timber companies and their allies inside the Forest Service have long succeeded in downplaying or concealing — accounts for the strong and growing conservative opposition to road subsidies as a particularly blatant form of corporate welfare.

Road construction is not just expensive, however; it also is environmentally destructive. Logging roads contribute greatly to soil erosion, particularly in mountainous areas of the West, and have been blamed for worsening problems with flooding and landslides. The

availability of subsidies also has encouraged timber companies to log remote and hard-to-reach forests that otherwise might be left alone, including stands of old-growth timber and roadless acreage that might be suitable for wilderness designation.

Environmental destruction is bad enough; federally subsidized environmental destruction is unconscionable. That is why bipartisan efforts to cut or eliminate road subsidies are gaining strength.

Last month, two congressmen, Illinois Republican John Porter and Massachusetts Democrat Joseph Kennedy, offered an amendment that would have eliminated all road-building credits and subsidies from this year's budget, saving taxpayers \$92 million. Though the effort was supported by such budget hawks as Ohio's John Kasich, chairman of the budget committee, House leaders managed to secure passage of a watered-down version that would cut almost \$31 million but lets the subsidy continue.

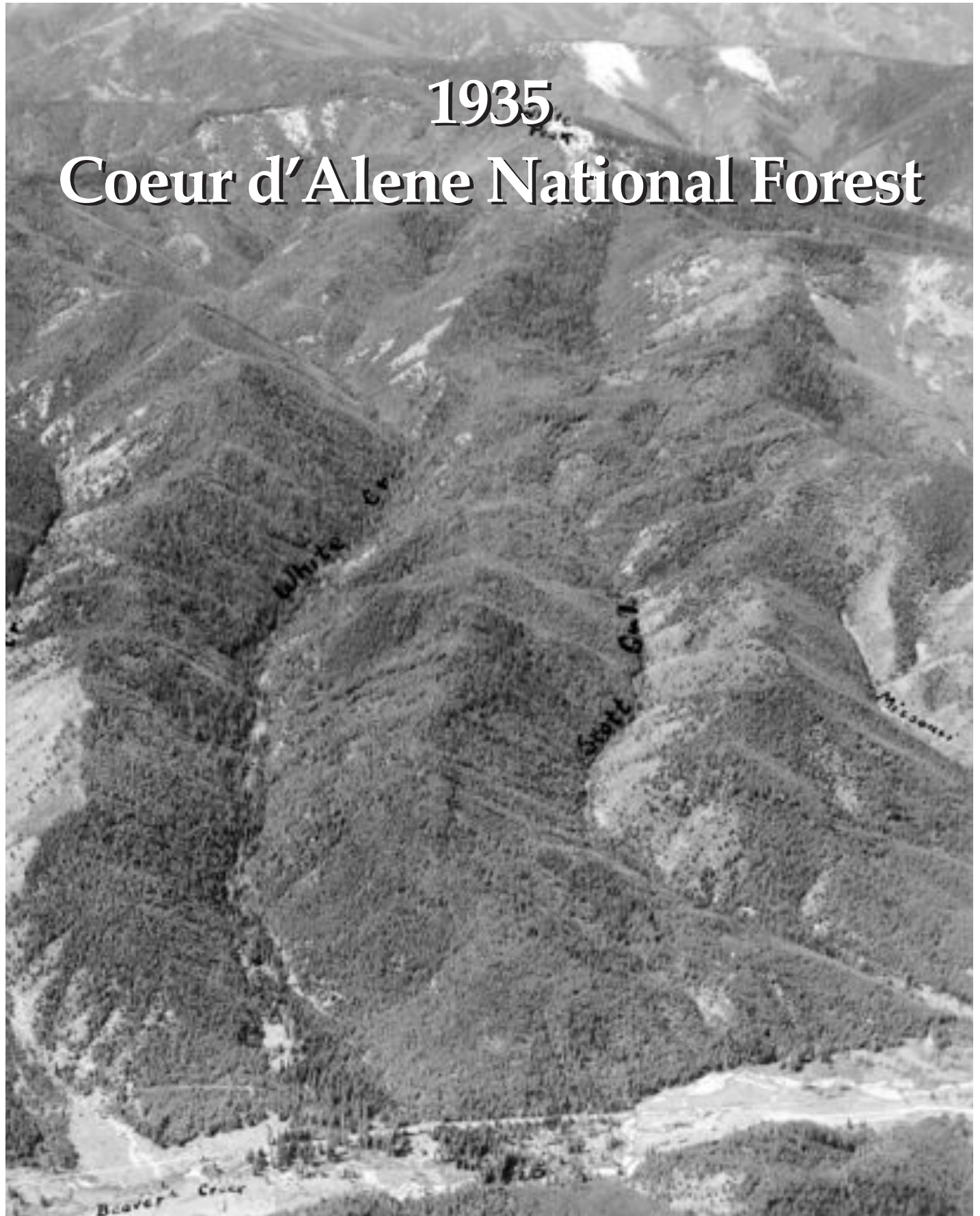
The Senate is to take up the issue next month. Nevada Democrat Richard Bryan is expected to offer an amendment similar to Porter and Kennedy's original proposal. Passage of that amendment — with the support of Ohio's two senators — would send a strong signal that the days of subsidized environmental degradation are over.

Cleveland, Ohio, August 19, 1997

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1935 Coeur d'Alene National Forest

U.S. FOREST SERVICE





1997 Coeur d'Alene National Forest

© Trygve Steen

The Seattle Times

End damaging, wasteful logging-road subsidies

Elected representatives from the Pacific Northwest, committed to the region's environmental values and schooled in fiscal pragmatism, should have an easy time standing up to government giveaways that violate both principles.

Not so. House members from Washington state (with the exception of Rep. Jim McDermott) voted earlier this summer to continue environmentally damaging and fiscally wasteful logging-road subsidies. The campaign to protect the federal road program, which pays for private construction of new logging roads in national forests, was spearheaded by Rep. Norm Dicks. Environmentalists had hoped for two favorable swing votes from Republican Rick White and Democrat Adam Smith. Instead, both squandered an opportunity to distinguish themselves as independent voices.

Now it's the Senate's turn.

Next month, Sen. Richard Bryan, D-Nev., is expected to offer an amendment to the Interior appropriations bill that would halt the multimillion-dollar deal between the Forest Service and private timber firms. Bryan's plan will be modeled after the defeated House amendment, favored by leading budget hawk John Kasich, R-Ohio, but opposed by every GOP member of our delegation even though it would have saved taxpayers \$90 million.

The Washington Wilderness Coalition notes that no other government agency provides such subsidies for road construction. The Bureau of Land Management requires purchasers of timber to assume the full costs of building access roads. There is simply no sound economic rationale for taxpayers to pick up the tab.

Will Sens. Slade Gorton and Patty Murray vote to continue serving up Big Timber's free lunch? Gorton appears to favor not only preserving the current subsidy, but *expanding* it. Murray has yet to take a position.

Analysis by the U.S. General Accounting Office shows that taxpayers lost nearly \$245 million between 1992 and 1994 because of the road giveaways, contributing to a net lost of \$995 million on total timber sales. A coalition of environmental and taxpayer groups has marshaled overwhelming evidence that subsidized roads — used almost exclusively by the private timber interest — cause destruction of habitat, soil erosion and mudslides. Guess who gets saddled with the tab for cleaning up those damages.

The numbers are clear. So is the environmental harm. This is an easy vote for the environment and for fiscal restraint.

Seattle, Washington, August 29, 1997

The Columbus Dispatch

Log-rolling

Chop funding for national timber roads

Each year, the U.S. Forest Service spends \$90 million to build logging roads deep into national forests so that timber companies can chop down more trees.

Philosophically, *The Dispatch* has no objection to the responsible harvesting of timber in national forests. Nevertheless, the extensive road-building, pushing farther and farther into difficult, mountainous terrain, is an absurd expenditure of tax dollars. It is time to end this rather naked subsidy to the timber industry.

It costs taxpayers far more to build these primitive roads, which are used exclusively by logging operations, than the government yields from the sale of timber. If these companies want to harvest the trees, they should pay for the roads themselves.

The fact is, national forests are already crisscrossed with hundreds of thousands of miles of timber roads. All the easy roads already have been built, meaning the new ones must push into more remote areas that make little economic sense to log.

It's not as if the market is desperate for wood. Ninety percent of the saw timber sold in the United States comes from private land, not national forests. When all forest products are considered, the proportion coming from government land is even less.

A bipartisan coalition made up of fiscal conservatives and environmental groups, led in part by Rep. John R. Kasich, R-Westerville, has united to stop this form of corporate welfare. A bill to abolish the subsidy came within two votes of passing in the House this summer. Only strong opposition from the Forest Service — a bloated bureaucracy filled with road-building engineers — thwarted that effort. Instead, the House cut the subsidy in half.

In the next few weeks, the fight moves to the Senate, where Sen. Richard Bryan, D-Nev., is sponsoring an amendment to cut all funds for logging roads. *The Dispatch* supports the Bryan amendment.

Columbus, Ohio, September 2, 1997

Reprinted with permission from The Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch.

The Washington Post

Cut the Cutting

THE 21-YEAR-OLD law governing logging in the national forests is too weak. The current Congress, oblivious to the damage that is being done to a dwindling resource, seeks to weaken it further—open up even more of the public preserve to the timber industry. The need instead is to tighten the statute—strengthen it.

The administration should take the lead on this—play aggressive offense on the issue, not just intermittent defense. It is a mystery why it has not. The step should be taken now; time is not on the forests' side. Some advocates would shift the current policy all the way to zero cut. In our view, it need not go that far. There are instances in which careful continued cutting of land already logged may make good sense. But the burden of proof in the statute ought to be changed so that continued cutting in the federal forests becomes the clear exception, not the rule. We are at a point in the exploitation of this resource where the duty of the government is to preserve what remains.

The government began to create the national forest system 100 years ago. Commercial logging inside the forests began in earnest about 50 years ago, after World War II, when demand for timber was high and private lands had been depleted. Congress made various efforts to control the process. A law was passed in 1960, another—the current National Forest Management Act—in 1976. The laws have had less effect than sponsors hoped, in part because of the muddy language that is too often the product of legislative compromise, in part because their enforcement has been in the hands of an agency—the Agriculture Department and its Forest Service—widely regarded as the willing captive of the industry whose activities it is meant to regulate.

Much of the effort to tighten administration of the management act has occurred in court, and in part on the basis of other statutes—

the Endangered Species Act, for example. In Congress, meanwhile, there have been the opposite efforts to waive or ease the laws just about any time they pinched. Such efforts multiplied after the Republicans took over Congress in the 1994 elections. A so called salvage timber rider to an appropriations bill expanded logging throughout the system, and there have been major fights about the logging of particular forests in such states as Alaska and California. Now Sen. Larry Craig of Idaho, chairman of the forests subcommittee, is pushing legislation that would weaken the management act directly. Those on the other side of the issue have tried, thus far without success and with only limited administration support, to use the appropriations process to block further construction of logging roads in unlogged parts of the forest. The roads are a major part of the subsidy that the government somehow continues to give the industry even in what is otherwise a tight budget era.

But the year-at-a-time appropriations process is the wrong place to wage a fundamental fight such as this. Nor are related statutes having to do with endangered species or clean water the right vehicles. The president ought to make an issue of the forests, force Congress to confront the question of preserving them head-on—while there are still some worth preserving. There would be the usual arguments against—need for the timber (lest home prices soar), need for the jobs, need for the local revenues the timbering generates. But the federal forests make up only a tiny share of the national timber supply, and the rest of these are local problems. That doesn't mean they're not serious, but the price of solving them ought not be the loss of a national treasure.

*Washington D.C., August 19, 1997
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San Francisco Chronicle

Corporate Welfare for Loggers

A deficit-minded Congress shouldn't think twice about axing a taxpayer subsidy for construction of logging roads in national forests.

The Senate's proposed budget for the Interior Department includes \$47.4 million for the construction of logging roads in national forests, but Senator Richard Bryan, D-Nev., plans to introduce an amendment this week to cut \$15 million in construction money and transfer another \$10 million to maintenance fund to be used for the upkeep or removal of existing roads.

Bryan also will seek to end a \$50 million "purchaser road credit program" that allows the Forest Service to give trees to timber companies to make up for road construction costs.

Bryan's amendment deserves unqualified support. His legislation does not prevent logging companies from building the roads. It just requires them to bear the cost.

Backers of the subsidy say that the roads ultimately benefit the public because they can be used for firefighting and eventual recreational use. Those benefits, when realized, are a long time coming, and they hardly make up for the erosion and other environmental damage caused by the forest arteries.

The subsidy is corporate welfare. Taxpayers should not have to foot the bill.

San Francisco, California, September 9, 1997

Salt Lake Tribune

Cut Timber Subsidy

Two months ago, the House blinked when faced with the chance to slash the timber industry's logging-road subsidy. This week, the Senate is expected to get a similar deficit-cutting, environmental-protecting opportunity; it shouldn't blow it.

At issue is the U.S. Forest Service's practice of supporting — either through direct expense or through a credit program — the construction of logging roads on USFS land for use by timber companies. Environmentalists claim these roads contribute to ecosystem degradation, and deficit-cutters say the subsidy is an anachronistic corporate-welfare program. So, it's an easy call to zero this appropriation out of the 1998 Interior spending bill, right?

Well, it wasn't so easy for the House in July. The Porter-Kennedy amendment would have cut \$41.5 million from road-building funds and would have virtually eliminated the \$50 million Purchaser Credit Program, by which timber companies deduct their road-building expenses from their USFS bill for the trees they take. But, by a two-vote margin, it was watered down by a pre-empting amendment that cut only \$5.6 million from the direct subsidy and \$25 million from the credit program. Net difference: About \$60 million.

This week, the Senate can make up much of that difference by passing Nevada Sen. Richard Bryan's amendment to the Interior spending bill. The Bryan amendment would not accomplish all the subsidy-cutting that Porter-Kennedy would have, but it would come

close. It deserves the same kind of courageous support in the Senate from Utah's Orrin Hatch and Bob Bennett that it got in the House from Merrill Cook.

The two-pronged appeal of this amendment is genuine. From a cost standpoint, the USFS should not be spending more taxpayer money to add to its inventory of roads, when it cannot maintain the 380,000 miles of roads it already has. And from an environmental standpoint, it is risky to continue building these roads, which have been fingered as a chief culprit in the recent landslide damage in the Northwest.

In Utah, the fear has been expressed that a decrease in USFS timber-sale revenues would hurt rural counties by reducing their 25 percent payments from the Forest Service. That concern is overstated and, in any event, may be rendered moot by mitigating language in the Bryan amendment insuring counties' 25 percent payments from USFS.

Senators on both sides of the aisle will find sound philosophical reasons for clearcutting the logging-road subsidies. Regardless of which one they choose, they should take the step that nearly half the House essentially did: they should pass the Bryan amendment.

Salt Lake City, Utah, September 8, 1997

Harrisburg Patriot News

NO BARGAIN

U.S. has no business subsidizing timber harvest on public lands

There are at least three good reasons why below-cost sales of timber from National Forests should stop:

Reason One: The government stands to lose \$40 million next year (\$200 million over five years) for selling trees to timber companies at below cost. It does this by compensating the firms for the expense of building roads through the forests to get to the trees, in some cases as much as \$1,000 for \$100 worth of timber.

Reason Two: Clear-cutting and road building destroy the few remaining roadless wilderness areas, contribute to landslides and floods, devastate fish stocks and alter the ecosystem of plants and animals. According to Barry Rosenberg of the Inland Empire Public Lands Council, "It took only one-half the water in 1996 to cause the same damage [in Idaho] as the floods in 1974 because the river flooded so much more easily."

Reason Three: The government is spending millions of dollars annually attempting to undo the damage inflicted by forest roads and clear-cutting. The Forest Service has obliterated 18,000 miles of roads in the last six years even as thousands of new roads were being built.

But with 380,000 miles of forest roads, more than eight times the length of the interstate highway system, the Forest Service has a lot

of catching up to do. Indeed, it would be naive to assume that the massive damage inflicted by the abysmal stewardship of the public forests can be restored to normalcy anytime soon, if it can ever be in many cases.

It isn't difficult, however, to figure out where the effort has to begin. The policy of subsidizing timber companies to cut the public forests to no advantage of either the Treasury or the environment has to end.

And there may be no more opportune time to do that than when U.S. Sen. Richard Bryan, D-Nev., offers an amendment to the Interior Department appropriations bill to stop the Forest Service's below-cost sales of timber.

A vote on that amendment could come as early as today. We urge Pennsylvania's two senators, Arlen Specter and Rick Santorum, to cast their votes to terminate a practice that uses millions of taxpayer dollars to destroy a public resource, and which contributes to a host of other ills that add up to countless millions more in damage to property and environmental losses.

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, September 10, 1997

Duluth News-Tribune

End forest road subsidy

In keeping with the healthy national trend toward smaller, less intrusive (and less expensive) government, it makes sense to end subsidizing with taxpayer dollars building roads for loggers in national forests.

That's the goal of a measure being considered in the U.S. Congress that would end a federal rebate to loggers for building new logging roads to gain access to timber or for reconstructing old, out-of-use roads.

The measure is being pushed by environmentalists, many of whom oppose any timber cutting in the forests, and fiscal conservatives, who consider the practice of reimbursing private logging companies when they build roads a form of corporate welfare.

The issue involves a tangled mix of interests, including the touchy one of jobs provided by the logging industry and the government historically losing money on timber sales.

Ending subsidies for road building would go far in cutting the government's timber-sale losses nationally.

The effect of ending the road-building subsidy on timber harvesting in the three national forests in the Northland would be minimal (only a few miles of roads are slated for construction this year), although industry sources say the value of the timber would be lowered if logging firms are not reimbursed for road building. So be it. Every business has its expenses, which are reflected in the price of products.

This measure should be approved, but timber harvesting on federal lands should continue if it can turn a profit for the government and contribute to good management of the resource.

Duluth, Minnesota, June 20, 1997

The Buffalo News

Time for Senate Action

Stop building timber roads at public cost

Environmental groups and fiscal conservatives, an unlikely alliance, find themselves in the same boat on an issue that comes to a head soon in the Senate. If nothing else, the issue puts the public spotlight on another of those funny little things the federal government does with taxpayer money.

In this case, the government subsidizes construction of a vast network of roads in national forests so timber companies can reach the publicly owned trees they want to cut down. When they go onto private land, timber companies pay to build their roads, but Uncle Sam has two ways of picking up the tab in national forests.

The 1998 budget has \$47.4 million for road construction by the Interior Department. There's also a \$50 million program for what are called purchaser road credits. Timber companies build their own logging roads but are given trees for reimbursement by the feds.

On the scene comes Sen. Richard Bryan, D-Nev., who will be offering a rider to the Interior appropriations bill later this week to eliminate or greatly reduce these outlays. In the context of the whole federal budget, the road-building items are very small stuff, but they are a needless corporate subsidy that carries adverse environmental consequences.

Senators should support the Bryan amendment, pulling off a double play to support fiscal responsibility and environmental concern all at once. They certainly should thwart an effort by Sen. Slade Gorton, R-Wash., who would raise the purchaser credit program.

The timber roads lead to soil erosion and are a threat to wildlife, particularly fish. Loose dirt from ill-maintained roads runs off into creeks and rivers, smothering fish habitat. The roads damage wetlands. At least some of our roadless outback merits preservation from intrusion. For his interest, Bryan blames erosion from old timber routes for beginning to cloud the waters of Lake Tahoe, a wonder of clear beauty that draws tourists to California and Nevada.

The road network in the national forest amounts to about 380,000 miles, eight times the mileage covered by the interstate highway system. Critics say it has become too extensive to maintain properly. They advocate obliteration of marginal roads and repairs to those that foul streams.

Timber and paper interests, in turn, argue that the roads really have a public purpose after all because they allow berry-picking and camping. But the Wilderness Society asserts most of the roads are closed to the public or usable only by powerful trucks.

Be sure the real purpose is to provide access for harvesting trees. There would be far fewer roads into the forests without that purpose.

Congress should stop making the road-building a public expense. If that stifles timbering in the national forests, the financial consequences would not be great because only 4 percent of the national timber production comes from that source. This should be an easy call.

Buffalo, New York, September 15, 1997

Kansas City Star

Costly forest subsidy

Unnecessary new roads must not be built.

One of the most important votes in Congress regarding the national forests may come up this week on the floor of the U.S. House. In a bipartisan move, an amendment is scheduled to be offered by Reps. John Porter, Illinois Republican, and Joe Kennedy, Massachusetts Democrat, to halt wasteful spending on the construction of new roads through the forests.

The roads that would be built if this amendment isn't adopted would lead to further clearcutting of the forests, at a high financial and environmental cost to U.S. taxpayers.

This same amendment failed in the House last year on a tie vote. The subsidies that will continue if this measure fails again cannot be justified under the belt-tightening that is being demanded by citizens of their federal government.

Construction of new logging roads in itself is a waste of money. Roads to logging sites often have to be built over remote and steep terrain. The costs that are incurred are a major factor in the loss to taxpayers of millions of dollars on Forest Service timber sales. Those losses already are nearly \$1 billion so far this decade.

Further, the Forest Service has told Congress that the national forests face a \$440 million backlog in maintenance needs already. So what is the point of building new roads, at additional cost to the taxpayers, given that existing roads are not being maintained?

Further, there are environmental concerns associated with the construction of roads through the forests. Chief among them is the effect on water quality and fishing through soil erosion and sedimentation in the streams. The Department of Agriculture has said that the major negative impact on water quality comes from roads. That affects not only fishing and fisheries, but hundreds of communities that get their drinking water from streams that go through the forests. Roads also harm wildlife by disturbing habitat and dividing forest communities.

The national forests already contain roads that, if put together, would be eight times the length of the interstate highway system. U.S. taxpayers should not be asked to continue an expensive subsidy of roads that lead nowhere but to further destruction of the nation's forests.

July 9, 1997

Tallahassee Democrat

Why a timber harvest supported by taxpayers?

Tell Congress to stop subsidizing logging roads that endanger national forests and mountain habitat.

Here, hold my gun and rob me. Who'd make such an offer? Our federal government, apparently. Every day our precious wood resources — trees on national preserves — are being harvested, aided and abetted by our government.

The feds built roads to the heart of our national forests. Then timber interests use those roads to harvest trees.

But it gets worse. Because the roads cost more than what timber companies pay us for access to the national forests, the federal government winds up *subsidizing* the enterprise.

So we're paying for it, through the National Forest Service, to the tune of \$1.9 billion over the last seven years.

That's a lot of wooden nickels.

Sullyng the drinking water

And environmental damage? Mountain slopes are stripped of trees needed to hold the soil in place. This increases the risks of erosion, landslides and pollution of mountain streams. More than 900 communities that get their drinking water from these streams are in jeopardy as the soil breaks free.

Forest roads stretch more than 380,000 miles — more miles than our national interstate system. The roads also wreck the habitats of grizzly bears and other mountain creatures on the timberline endangering their survival.

We may get mad, but we can also get even. This week, Sen. Richard Bryan, a Democrat from Nevada, will offer an amendment to the Interior Department appropriations bill that would eliminate federal subsidies for logging roads. Dozens of environmental and citizen watchdog groups are marshaling forces to support the amendment.

Tallahasseeans are joining in, sending support for protecting national forests through the Florida Chapter Sierra Club, the Florida Consumer Action Network and the Western Ancient Forest Campaign. The southeastern sentiment is critical, as a similar amendment was chopped down in the U.S. House last July.

The vote could come Tuesday or Wednesday. Tell Sens. Connie Mack (202-224-5274) and Bob Graham (202-224-3041) that we want to save our forests. Who would choose to endanger mountain forests and use our tax dollars so inefficiently?

Tallahassee, Florida, September 8, 1997

The Tampa Tribune

End the great logging road sham

As they return from summer recess, U.S. senators face a matter that will reveal much about their concerns for taxpayers, fairness and the environment.

The issue: logging roads. Congress now forces taxpayers to subsidize the timber industry's construction of roads through national forests. These roads cause erosion, pollute rivers and creeks and deface the wilderness. They also result in landslides during heavy rains. The roads' only purpose is to allow logging to cut more trees.

Agriculture Undersecretary Jim Lyons says, "Our No. 1 water quality problem in the national forests is roads."

There already are more than 380,000 miles of logging roads carved through the forests — eight times the length of the Interstate Highway System. And the Forest Service has a \$440 million backlog of road maintenance work.

Yet some members of Congress want to build even more forest roads — at taxpayer expense. Sen. Slade Gorton, a Washington Republican, is sponsoring legislation that would allow loggers to build roads virtually without restraint.

Gordon would gouge taxpayers and defile forests to benefit timber companies, which contribute heavily to his campaigns. The House did little better, slightly reducing funding for road construction in national forests.

In contrast, Sen. Richard Bryan, a Nevada Democrat, would put an end to this rip-off. He offers a bill that would end the subsidies. It would not, it should be stressed, prohibit the building of roads in national forests. It would simply ensure that timber companies paid for them.

Little wonder that environmental groups have been joined by anti-tax groups in support of the proposal. The logging road program is Big Government at its lavish worst — forcing taxpayers at large to pay for a program that benefits only a few special interests.

Senators should end this continuing, costly insult to the taxpayers and the environment.

Tampa, Florida, September 10, 1997



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The Philadelphia Inquirer

Give it the ax

Stop subsidizing logging roads in national forests.

It's bad enough when public officials fail to stop private interests from degrading the environment. It's even worse when government subsidizes the harm, as it does with logging roads in national forests.

Congress must end this nonsense.

There are hundreds of thousands of miles of logging roads in national forests. Some areas have 20 miles of roads crammed into a square mile. The result: damaged watersheds, stripped habitats, unmajestic mountains.

Rallying to stop this are a host of environmental groups, such as the Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club and Friends of the Earth. They're teamed up with penny-pinchers such as the Concord Coalition, Taxpayers for Common Sense and Citizens Against Government Waste.

The Senate is about to have a showdown vote over this. The environmental and antiwaste groups are backing an amendment by Sen. Richard Bryan (D., Nev.) to the bill that funds the Interior Department.

The Bryan Amendment would slice federal spending on logging roads in national forests by \$25 million — a cut of more than one-half.

And it would save even more — perhaps \$50 million — by ending a credit to logging companies that build their own roads in these forests. (The companies take the credit in the form of free trees.)

If you think this subsidy will be easy to kill, think again. A similar amendment in the House — spearheaded by Budget Committee Chairman John Kasich (R., Ohio) — failed in July by two votes.

Why? Well, keep in mind that, according to the U.S. Public Interest Research Group, political action committees tied to the timber industry pumped more than \$8 million into congressional campaigns between 1991 and 1996.

It's true that the amount of roadbuilding in national forests has been declining, but not fast enough, so the Bryan Amendment is needed. And if Congress doesn't do the right thing, perhaps President Clinton will belatedly rise to the occasion. He could fix this problem, at least for the next year, with his line-item veto pen.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, September 9, 1997

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The New York Times

A Senseless Federal Subsidy

There is not much good to say about the way the Federal Government has managed the national forests. Over the years, the Forest Service has behaved more like a partner of the timber industry it is supposed to regulate than as a fiduciary for the American people, who on the whole would like to see more of the forests preserved for future generations rather than cut for immediate profit. Changing that will require a new mindset in the Forest Service and a tightening of the outdated National Forest Management Act of 1976. But in the near term, perhaps as early as tomorrow, the Senate can do something positive for the forests by getting rid of a small but pernicious subsidy that fuels deforestation at taxpayer expense.

At issue is a program under which the Forest Service builds access roads in the national forests to help logging operations. The roads are built either by the Service itself or through "purchaser credits," whereby the companies build the roads and are then reimbursed with what amounts to free or below-cost timber. Taken together, the two programs add up to a \$97 million annual subsidy.

Two months ago the House agreed to modest changes, cutting the \$50 million "purchaser credit" program in half and making small reductions in the \$47 million appropriation for the Forest Service's own road-building program. Senator Richard Bryan, Democrat of Nevada, hopes to do better. Later this week he will offer a rider to the Interior Appropriations bill that would abolish the credit program

altogether and divert some of the Forest Service appropriation to maintaining old roads rather than building new ones.

The amendment deserves the support of Mr. Bryan's colleagues. The national forests account for only 4 percent of the nation's timber production, which means that the companies will not go bust if their subsidies are eliminated. Indeed, surveys by various environmental groups suggest that without the subsidy, most companies will simply stay away from roadless areas.

At the same time, roads create environmental havoc, speeding soil erosion, clogging wetlands with debris and destroying streams. Both Michael Dombeck, the new head of the Forest Service, and Jim Lyons, who as the Under Secretary of Agriculture is Mr. Dombeck's boss, have said their biggest problem is containing the environmental damage caused by 377,000 miles of existing roads. Neither seems all that eager to build new ones.

That is a fairly enlightened attitude for a Federal bureaucracy that historically has been far more interested in harvesting trees than in acting as a responsible steward of the American landscape. It is now time for the Senate to do some pruning of the legislative landscape, eliminating once and for all a truly destructive program.

The New York Times, September 10, 1997

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Dallas Morning News

Forest Roads

Budget cutters could ax this subsidy

The U.S. Forest Service oversees America's federally owned trees. It also oversees the 380,000 miles of roads running through those forests. Forest Service officials say they don't need that many roads, and are \$440 million behind in maintenance.

So the national forests probably don't need *new* roads, particularly if the roads are built to allow loggers access to remote areas. Reps. John Edward Porter, R-Ill., and Joe Kennedy, D-Mass., tried to cut \$41 million for forest road construction from an appropriations bill. Unfortunately, the House agreed to cut only \$5.6 million.

Budget-conscious and environmentally minded senators should retain at least that meager cut. A wide range of people — from the balanced-budget folks at the Concord Coalition to the nature-loving supporters of the Wilderness Society — back the idea. Timber groups oppose the road cuts and dispute the figures used to justify them.

Roads can contribute to ecological problems, including erosion and mudslides, and contamination of creeks and lakes. If loggers want to cut remote, publicly owned timber, they should pay for the road to reach it.

Dallas, Texas, July 13, 1997

The Boston Globe

Prime target for the budget ax

All too often, congressional pledges of fiscal frugality melt away meekly before powerful interests. The timber industry enjoys a generous taxpayers subsidy of some \$50 million annually in the form of roads built with the federal dollars in national forests to help loggers cut and transport trees.

Some clear-eyed deficit hawks, including John Kasich of Ohio, chairman of the House Budget Committee, see this as a straightforward example of corporate welfare. They moved to kill it in the House in July but failed when a watered-down alternative passed on a vote as narrow as a pine needle — 211-209.

The Senate has a chance to do better. Senator Richard Bryan of Nevada wants to cut \$15 million from the road-building appropriation and eliminate another subsidy in the form of credits the companies can take for feeder roads they build. This amendment deserves passage.

One doesn't have to be either a Democrat who thinks last year's welfare cuts were too deep or a Republican who thinks this year's tax cuts aren't deep-enough to want an end to such giveaways.

Indeed, one doesn't have to look further than the National Forest Service. In the White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire, officials started collecting an admission fee from visitors this year, while logging operations there have cost the government \$1 million

a year, according to a report from the General Accounting Office.

In Maine, extensive logging takes place almost exclusively on land owned by the paper and timber companies. They build their own roads. National forests that do not contain enough mature trees to make logging, including the cost of road-building, profitable would be better off if allowed to age in peace until they are ripe for selective harvesting.

The market should prevail, not subsidies from taxpayers.

Boston, Massachusetts, September 11, 1997

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(4) Hope for the Future

Forest chief shifts focus to clean water

Dombeck's speech suggests agency needs to learn limits

From staff and wire reports

The U.S. Forest Service needs to focus more on clean water and flood control, Forest Service Chief Mike Dombeck said Monday, signaling that logging may no longer be king.

"We can leave no greater gift for our children, show no greater respect for our forefathers, than to leave (the) watersheds entrusted to our care healthier, more diverse and more productive," Dombeck said.

"That is my vision for this great agency. And with your help, it can be our most important and lasting legacy."

Dombeck harkened back to 100-year-old legislation during his speech to about 300 agency employees in Washington, D.C.

People most often talk about the 1897 Organic Act in terms of logging, he noted. But the driving force behind that early Forest Service legislation was better intact watersheds that "absorb rain, recharge underground aquifers, provide cleaner water to people and reduce drinking water treatment costs," Dombeck said.

"Healthy watersheds dissipate floods... increasing soil fertility and minimizing damage to lives, property, and streams."

That's important considering at least 900 municipal watersheds are surrounded by national forests.

Politics will continue to insert itself into natural resource management, he said, acknowledging the furor over some of his recent proposals, including a "time-out" on new logging road construction in some roadless areas.

"Our jobs are not easy jobs," Dombeck said. But "conservation has moved from a 'special interest' to a national priority."

The Forest Service must be a leader in using the best science and the best managers to accomplish "what I think is one of the noblest, most important callings of our generation — bringing people together and helping them find ways to live within the limits of the land."

That also is a marked shift for an agency more known for an attitude of limitless resource production from national forests.

Dombeck's speech is not likely to be well received by Western Republicans in Congress. Last week a group of them threatened to ax the agency's budget in retaliation for the road construction moratorium in roadless areas.

That group included U.S. Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, Reps. Don Young, R-Alaska, and U.S. Rep. Helen Chenoweth, R-Idaho.

Dombeck and Assistant Agriculture Secretary Jim Lyons, who oversees the Forest Service, are scheduled to testify today before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, chaired by Sen. Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska.

Meanwhile, Lyons is publicly taking issue with the funding threats.

"In many respects it was about trying to scare the hell out of our employees — to make them fear that unless the agency continues to focus primarily on timber, that budgets will be reduced, that employees' jobs will be at risk," Lyons said after Dombeck's speech.

• Staff writer Ken Olsen contributed to this report

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Lawmakers threaten to cut forest funds over road dispute

From staff and wire reports

Western Republican lawmakers threatened steep cuts in the Forest Service's budget Wednesday if it imposes an 18-month moratorium on logging road construction in roadless areas.

But squeezing the Forest Service will only magnify the need for a road construction moratorium, considering the agency has a \$10 billion maintenance backlog on its 440,000 miles of road, environmentalists say.

The Forest Service proposed the moratorium last month, estimating it will mean the agency will sell a maximum of 275 million fewer board feet of timber. By comparison, the timber industry didn't buy 405 million board feet of trees offered by the Forest Service in 1997. More than 6.4 billion board feet of timber have been sold but left uncut in national forests, agency officials said.

That hasn't quieted the vitriol from opposing politicians. Wednesday, several GOP committee chairmen accused the administration of pandering to environmentalists by proposing the moratorium.

"If you want to get their attention, (the budget) is the best way," Rep. Don Young, it-Alaska, chairman of the House Resources Committee, said at a news conference.

Western Republicans have been at odds with President Clinton's natural resource policies since he took office in 1993. Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, said the proposed roads moratorium in most areas of national forests without roads was "a bit of the straw that broke the camel's back."

"I sense they wanted a political issue for the 1998 election," said Craig, chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources subcommittee on forests and public lands.

Young said the Forest Service doesn't need its \$3.3 billion budget if it is going to produce only about one-fourth the level of timber from national forests that it harvested in the 1980s. That statement appears to contradict the usual argument from western Republicans that Forest Service logging pays for itself and costs taxpayers nothing.

Meanwhile, U.S. Rep. Helen Chenoweth grilled Forest Service Chief Mike Dombeck during the hearing.

"It used to be the Congress set policy, and the agency carried out the policy," said Chenoweth, R-Idaho, chairwoman of the House Resources subcommittee on forests and forest health. "This administration believes it is above the law."

Chenoweth said she suspects Vice President Al Gore is behind the road-building policy. But Dombeck said the idea originated with himself and his staff as a reflection of concerns about the condition of the 373,000 miles of roads in national forests.

"The road system we have today is tremendously larger than what we can afford," Dombeck testified. Road construction can cause increased frequency of flooding and landslides, and increased sedimentation of streams.

"Roads leave a lasting imprint on the landscape," he said, pointing to a \$10.5 billion backlog in maintenance needs," Dombeck said. "What I have proposed is essentially a time-out on road building in many unroaded areas until Congress, the administration and the American people can engage in a constructive dialogue about when and where roads will be built in our national forests," Dombeck said.

The public-comment period on the moratorium will be extended until March 30, he said.

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Protecting the forest for all the people

EDITH ROOSEVELT DERBY WILLIAMS

Special to *The Times*

I am always pleased to have a chance to reintroduce my grandfather, Theodore Roosevelt, to all of you who are much too young to know about him. As a president, he is memorialized at Mount Rushmore along with George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln. Teddy Roosevelt, for whom the Teddy bear is named, was passionate in his beliefs about conservation. My grandfather firmly believed that the public lands belonged to *we the people* — and not to special-interest groups with excessive wealth and power.

As president, Roosevelt set aside over 100 million acres as National Forest: over half of the current National Forest system. Roosevelt protected much of our forest here in the Pacific Northwest to keep them out of the hands of timber syndicates. At the same time, Roosevelt made very sure that the proper agency was set up to preserve and protect these lands: the Forest Service.

Under the able leadership of Roosevelt's chief forester and close friend, Gifford Pinchot, the Forest Service established the doctrine of "multiple use" — the National Forests would be both preserved and still used.

So what happened? Soon after Roosevelt left the White House his successor, President Taft, fired Gifford Pinchot for refusing to put private timber interests above the public interest. In the years since, many of our brightest and our best in the service have suffered the same fate. Why? Because they believed as Roosevelt believed in obeying the law and protecting our public lands.

Over the years and especially since World War II, the Forest Service shifted to "single use": timber production. The Forest Service has wandered far from its principled commitment to protect the National Forests for all the people.

What has happened to the public lands in the 50 years since my husband and I settled in the Pacific Northwest? It is a very dismal tale and I know that you have heard it many times. But it bears repeating time and time again to arouse the American public to stop what is happening to *their public lands*.

As everyone knows who has spent time in the forest or looked out an airplane window, the once verdant canopy over the mountains is now pockmarked with clear-cuts. Clear-cuts mar the landscape. Logging roads further tear at the fabric of the forests. Over 370,000 miles of logging roads crisscross the 156 National Forests — 370,000 miles of roads. This makes the Forest Service the largest road-building entity in the history of mankind, and the American taxpayers the financiers of every mile. We have enough logging roads to circle the equator 15 times. The Coeur d'Alene National Forest in north Idaho averages over 10 miles of logging roads for every mile of forest.

The healthy forest acts as a sponge that absorbs the water that comes from melting snows and from rains. This forest sponge is destroyed by clear-cutting and roads. The land cannot hold onto the water. All over the Northwest, the massive landslides and floods have been devastating. Floods are especially bad in the Coeur d'Alene because they carry downstream millions of pounds of lead and other poisons from mining in Idaho — polluting waters downstream in Eastern Washington.



Dictionary of American Portraits

President Teddy Roosevelt

Not only do the clear-cuts and roads cause flooding, but they fill streams with silt and debris. Trout streams are ruined and can no longer claim their title. Salmon and steelhead have no place to spawn. Commercial fishing is threatened by the loss of habitat in our National Forests. The quality of recreational fishing is diminished. Municipal watersheds all along the Cascade Mountains are at risk.

The money doesn't exist to maintain the current massive road systems and undo the damage. Yet, Congress wants to build even more logging roads. Taxpayers pay millions of dollars for these roads, actually pay to damage and destroy their own National Forests, and pay yet again to try to fix the damage. These logging road subsidies are irresponsible to the American taxpayer.

The majority of our congressional delegation are among the chief villains. The inheritance that Theodore Roosevelt secured for all Americans is being flagrantly and thoughtlessly destroyed. He would be distraught. And believe me, so am I.

This ravage of our forests, our public lands, our children's inheritance, must be stopped, right now!

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Mike Dombeck, Forest Service Chief

