

A photograph of a person wearing a hat and dark clothing, standing in a forest and touching a large tree trunk. The forest floor is covered in fallen leaves and moss. The background is filled with tall trees and dense foliage.

# ROADLESS AREAS OF OREGON

WHAT WE'VE LOST AND WHAT WE STAND TO LOSE

A REPORT BY  
OREGON NATURAL RESOURCES COUNCIL  
BARK



# OREGON NATIONAL FOREST ROADLESS FACTS

There are 1,965,000 acres of roadless areas on Oregon's National Forests that are protected by the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. If the Bush administration reverses the Roadless Rule, 1,168,000 acres, or 59.4 percent of those areas would be immediately opened to logging and road-building.

Forest	Roadless Acres	Acres of Roadless Areas at Risk	Percentage at Risk	Forest	Roadless Acres	Acres of Roadless Areas at Risk	Percentage at Risk
Deschutes	136,000	79,000	58.1	Siuslaw	52,000	18,000	34.6
Fremont	87,000	61,000	70.1	Umatilla	282,000	129,000	45.7
Malheur	182,000	120,000	65.9	Umpqua	110,000	35,000	31.8
Mt. Hood	118,000	31,000	26.3	Wallowa - Whitman	515,000	510,000	99.0
Ochoco	61,000	29,000	47.5	Willamette	158,000	72,000	45.6
Rogue River	82,000	51,000	62.2	Winema	32,000	8,000	25.0
Siskiyou	287,000	108,000	37.6				

Source: US Forest Service<sup>1</sup>

There are currently more than seventy thousand miles of roads traversing Oregon's National Forests. The current road maintenance backlog for these existing roads is more than half a billion dollars.

	Deferred Maintenance		Capital Improvements		
State	Critical	Non-Critical	Critical	Non-Critical	Total
Oregon	\$101,880,457	\$462,546,543	\$77,375,050	\$22,206,341	\$664,008,391

Source: US Forest Service<sup>2</sup>

The citizens of Oregon submitted more comments per-capita on the Roadless Rule than any other state in the nation. Ninety-two percent of the more than seventy-nine thousand comments received by the Forest Service from the citizens of Oregon during the development of the Roadless Rule supported the complete protection of all roadless areas.

<sup>1</sup>Final Environmental Impact Statement - Appendix A Inventoried Roadless Area Acreage Categories Of Nfs Lands Summarized By State, November 13, 2000

<sup>2</sup> United States Department of Agriculture. Forest Service. 2003. *Fiscal year 2004 Forest Service Budget Justification*. (Washington, DC).

<sup>3</sup> Dombeck, Mike, Chief, United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, An Opportunity; December 29, 1999

<sup>4</sup> Glickman, Daniel, Secretary of Agriculture, quoted in Forest Service Press Release, FS-0109. November 13, 2000.

## INTRODUCTION

Between 1992 and 1997, nearly sixteen million acres of forest, farms, and open space across the nation were converted to urban or other uses.<sup>3</sup> As America's population centers continue to grow and wild and open spaces disappear, our national forests become more and more valuable.

In 1998, the U.S. Forest Service responded to the nation's need and desire to protect its last wild forests by placing an 18-month moratorium on the construction of new roads in the last remaining unprotected and unroaded, or "roadless", forests on the national forest system. In 1999, the Forest Service began a rulemaking process to determine the future of these last remaining roadless areas. During that process, more than 600 public meetings and hearings were held throughout the country, and more than 1.6 million Americans sent comments to the Forest Service - more than five times more comments than had ever been received on any federal rulemaking in US history. More than ninety-five percent of those comments nationally, and ninety-two percent in Oregon asked for the complete protection of all roadless areas.

According to then Secretary of Agriculture, Dan Glickman, "Never before have the American people so actively participated in helping to decide how their public lands should be managed."<sup>4</sup> To date, more than 2.5 million comments have been received supporting the complete protection of our last roadless forests. In January of 2001, the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, which protects the remaining inventoried roadless areas on our national forests from most logging, road construction, drilling and mining, was signed into law.

But just as the Roadless Rule was scheduled to take effect, the Bush administration moved to block it. First, White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card froze its implementation. Then Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman postponed its effective date, and announced the Bush Administration's intentions to amend the rule and reopen the public comment process. On December 23, 2003, while families across America gathered for the holiday season, the Bush administration removed the largest national forest in the country, the Tongass Rainforest of Alaska, from protection under the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. This was despite receiving nearly 250,000 public comments opposing the exemption. Since then, the administration has announced intentions to revise or remove protections from the roadless areas throughout the country, including Oregon.

The national forests of Oregon are already traversed by more than seventy thousand miles of roads. If the Bush administration reverses the rule, another 1,168,00 acres of currently protected roadless areas would immediately be opened to road-building and logging under existing forest plans.

This report profiles several of the roadless areas we have lost in Oregon's national forests prior to the enactment of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, and just a few of the roadless areas we stand to lose if the rule is reversed.

**IF THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION REVERSES THE ROADLESS AREA CONSERVATION RULE, MORE THAN A MILLION ACRES OF CURRENTLY PROTECTED ROADLESS AREAS ON OREGON'S NATIONAL FORESTS WOULD IMMEDIATELY BE OPENED TO LOGGING AND ROAD-BUILDING.**

# BADGER CREEK WILDERNESS ADDITION



Yellow line marks the roadless area boundary



The Badger Creek Wilderness Addition , before and after the 3 Conifer Timber Sales, from satellite images, and on the ground.

The US Forest Service's "3 Conifer" timber sale approved more than three thousand acres of logging in the White River Watershed on the Mount Hood National Forest. The sale included the logging of old growth stands of ponderosa pine within an inventoried roadless area adjacent to the Badger Creek Wilderness. Despite the fact that the area had been designated a "Tier 2 Watershed", an area where only activities that maintain or enhance water quality are permitted, the logging of the 3 Conifer timber sales contributed to devastation of Threemile creek.

Because the timber sale was issued under the notorious 1995 "Salvage Rider" which exempted timber sales from environmental laws, conservationists had no legal power to challenge this sale. Citizens submitted comments and letters, and efforts were made to raise awareness. But the public was ignored, the sale went through, and the area was logged

Another timber sale, "Douglas Cabin," has been proposed by the Forest Service in a roadless old-growth reserve east of the Badger Creek Wilderness.

**BADGER CREEK  
WILDERNESS  
ADDITION  
-  
MOUNT HOOD  
NATIONAL  
FOREST**



# ILLINOIS-APPLEGATE DIVIDE ROADLESS AREA



Ancient Forests of the Illinois-Applegate Divide Roadless Area Before and After the Sugarloaf Timber Sale  
Photos by Robert Brothers and Elizabeth Feryl

The Sugarloaf Timber Sale, in the ancient forests of the Illinois-Applegate Divide Roadless Area on Oregon's Siskiyou National Forest, is one of the most infamous in Forest Service history. It could also be a harbinger of things to come. In what looks alarmingly like a blueprint for the Bush Administration's "Healthy Forests Initiative," the Forest Service held that the project was necessary to "restore forest health" and "reduce fire risk". Normally, such activities include thinning brush, or clearing thick forest understories of debris. In stark contrast, the Forest Service logged a roadless area that had been designated for the protection of mature and ancient forests and clean water in a key watershed for wild salmon and ancient forest dependent species. The agency sold off the largest, most fire resistant, healthiest, ancient forests on the site. Conservationists challenging a Department of Agriculture claim that "only a few" older trees were a part of the sale discovered a secret agency field survey which disclosed that more than a thousand of the trees marked for cutting were more than four feet in diameter, and up to 700 years old.

The Sugarloaf Timber Sale was awarded to timber giant Boise Cascade, the largest logger of ancient forests on the national forest system. After ten years of vocal opposition by local citizens and communities postponed the logging, Boise Cascade and the Forest Service created a 35-mile "no enter zone" around the timber sale and set up a mini logging town inside the boundary.

By the time the trees had fallen, more than 200 people had been arrested for protesting the logging, including 57 on October 11, 1995. Among them were former Marine and National Audubon Society executive Brock Evans and a minister from nearby Grants Pass. They were arrested for crossing the Forest Service's proclaimed boundary, and "trespassing" on publicly owned land.

The Illinois-Applegate Divide Roadless Area still contains 50,000 acres of wild forest spanning the California-Oregon border. However, several timber sales have been planned within the area, and without the protection of the Roadless Rule it will continue to be threatened from these – and other – devastating logging projects.

ILLINOIS-  
APPLEGATE  
DIVIDE  
ROADLESS  
AREA  
-  
SISKIYOU  
NATIONAL  
FOREST

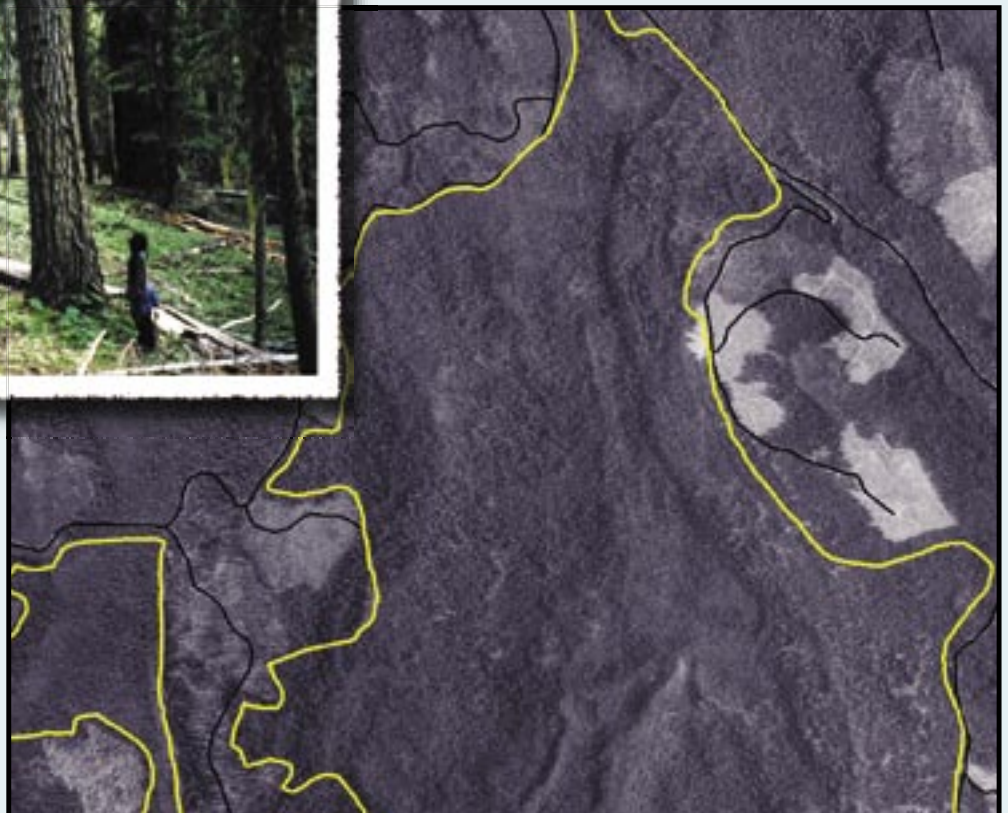
## MT. BAILEY ROADLESS AREA 1998

In 1992, The Forest Service requested public input on a proposal to log seventeen million board feet from 408 acres of the Umpqua National Forest's largest unprotected roadless area, Mt. Bailey. The only public comments received by the Forest Service asked them not to log or build

roads into the ancient forests of the area, which house the American marten, pileated woodpecker, elk, spotted owl, eagles, falcons, lynx, wolverines and numerous other ancient and interior forest dependent species.

After passage of the Salvage Rider in 1995, which suspended environmental laws in the name of "forest health", the Forest Service increased the proposal from seventeen million board feet on 408 acres to 26 million board feet (about 5,000 log truck loads) on 1,209 acres. The project included the construction of 9.6 miles of new roads within the roadless area.

Boise Cascade was awarded the contract for the Paw Timber Sales in 1998, and



**MT. BAILEY  
ROADLESS  
AREA**

**UMPQUA  
NATIONAL  
FOREST**

Yellow line marks the roadless area boundary



## MT. BAILEY ROADLESS AREA 2000

logged the area over the next two years.

The satellite images below depict the Mt. Bailey Roadless Area before and after the Bear Paw and Paw Chopper Timber Sales. The yellow line is the boundary of the roadless area before and after the logging. All of these timber sales would have been illegal under the Roadless Area Conservation Rule.

In 1987, the Umpqua National Forest had 133,184 acres of unprotected roadless areas that would have been eligible for protection under the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. Two years later, 27,642 acres of those roadless areas were eliminated from the inventory due to having been fragmented by roads and logging.



**MT. BAILEY  
ROADLESS  
AREA**

**UMPQUA  
NATIONAL  
FOREST**

# MOUNT JEFFERSON SOUTH ROADLESS AREA



The ancient forest lined "3455" hiking trail in the heart of the roadless area, and the area proposed for logging  
Photo by Jeremy Hall

In the summer of 2003, the B & B forest fire burned in a mosaic around the Cascade crest, south of Mt. Jefferson. Although the fire perimeter encircled 90,769 acres, the majority of the area either did not burn at all or burned at a low intensity.

During the fire, two hundred acres of the 2,260 acre Mt. Jefferson-South roadless area adjacent to the Mt. Jefferson Wilderness on the Willamette National Forest were burned. Citing an urgent need to "salvage" the economic value of the two hundred acres of burned trees, the Forest Service proposed building a network of roads into this pristine forest, in order to haul large trees from mature and ancient forests affected by the fire. If implemented, the project would have eliminated the area from currently proposed Wilderness protection. Fortunately, public opposition led by Oregon Natural Resources Council managed to persuade the Forest Service to drop this ill-conceived plan.

Without the protection of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, however, this area, and its stands of ancient forests, hiking trails to the Mt. Jefferson Wilderness, critical spotted owl habitat and municipal watershed for the City of Salem and outlying communities, remain in danger of future logging and road-building proposals by the agency.

**MOUNT  
JEFFERSON  
SOUTH  
ROADLESS  
AREA**

**WILLAMETTE  
NATIONAL  
FOREST**



# ROADLESS AREAS OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE



Larch Mountain and the Herman Creek Trail in the Columbia River Gorge  
Photos by David Thomas and Russ Taylor



The US Forest Service recently proposed opening protected areas of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, including the Larch Mountain, and Eagle Creek Roadless Areas, to clearcutting and other forms of industrial logging.

The wild forests of the Columbia River Gorge are composed of five major ecosystems that contain eight-hundred species of flowering plants - fifteen of which occur nowhere else in the world - as well as seventy sensitive, threatened or endangered species.

Under the National Scenic Area Act, the Columbia River Gorge was divided into a General Management Area (GMA) and a Scenic Management Area (SMA). The GMA was open to multiple uses, including clearcutting. More stringent standards were placed on the SMA lands to ensure their proper management for the protection and enhancement of scenic, natural, cultural, recreational and other public values.

Since the passage of the National Scenic Area Act, a dramatic amount of logging has occurred within the GMA. Scenic landscapes, fish and wildlife habitat, biodiversity, recreation and other resources have all been harmed by extensive clearcutting on GMA lands within the Gorge.

Oregonians have shown up in force to defend against the Forest Service proposal to open the Scenic Management Areas to similar devastating practices. The Forest Service has responded by scaling back rather than eliminating the proposed clearcutting, and the roadless areas of the Columbia River Gorge remain at risk.

More recently, Senator Wyden has announced plans to introduce legislation to protect the inventoried roadless areas in the Columbia River Gorge as Wilderness. Protecting these areas as Wilderness would forever protect their unique scenic and recreational values.

**ROADLESS  
AREAS OF THE  
COLUMBIA  
RIVER GORGE**

**MT. HOOD  
NATIONAL  
FOREST**

# SISKIYOU WILD RIVERS ROADLESS AREAS



The Once and Future Wild Kalmiopsis. Above after thousands of years of intermittent fire. On left after the recent "Biscuit" fire.

Photos by Barbara Ullian

In November of 2003, the Forest Service proposed the largest timber sale in recent history in the Siskiyou Wild Rivers Area of the Siskiyou National Forest. The area has been recognized internationally for its outstanding biological diversity, wild unspoiled rivers, fire sculpted forests, and unique geology. It has been proposed for protection as a National Conservation Area. The Forest Service proposal calls for logging fifty square miles of the heart of the Wild Siskiyou. This is more logging than occurred in all national forests in the Pacific Northwest last year.

The logging is being proposed by the Forest Service as a "post fire salvage sale" – a logging project aimed at salvaging the monetary value of fire damaged trees. In 2002 a fire known as the "Biscuit Fire" burned across half a million acres in the heart of the Siskiyou Wild Rivers area. However, according to Forest Service scientists, the Biscuit Fire burned in a mosaic pattern, burning some stands of trees, and leaving other areas intact. Both damaged trees and healthy stands of pristine old-growth and intact roadless areas would be logged under the Forest Service proposal.

According to the Forest Service, the ecological damage from the proposed logging would disqualify 57,000 acres of roadless wildlands including the Squaw Mountain and Windy Valley Roadless Areas from future protection.

**SISKIYOU  
WILD RIVERS  
AREA**

**SISKIYOU  
NATIONAL  
FOREST**





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Over two decades ago, concerned individuals who saw increasing threats to the natural heritage that makes Oregon and the Northwest unique in the world met at a campground to determine how committed activism could right environmental wrongs. Their passion helped create ONRC, Oregon's most effective and best recognized environmental advocate.

ONRC's mission is to aggressively defend Oregon's wild lands-- its forests, rivers, coast, and high desert. ONRC's professional, grass-roots-driven field staff works directly with local citizens and citizen groups to incorporate environmental concerns into statewide, region-wide and nationwide programs. ONRC's long list of successes in the face of powerful political and economic interests has been made possible by members, activists, and affiliated organizations willing to take the lead in their own communities. With over 5,000 members, it is hoped that ONRC's "watchdog" role will protect our natural resources for this and future generations.



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Bark is a community-based grassroots conservation group dedicated to preserving the forests, waters, and wildlife of Mt. Hood National Forest. Through on-the-ground monitoring, education, and outreach, Bark ensures that public forests are managed in the public interest.

Forests provide our community with clean air, pure water, habitat for endangered species, refuge and recreation, but they are not being protected by the current environmental laws. Logging is frequently allowed in sensitive areas, even in watersheds that provide our drinking water; and taxpayers are footing the bill for forest destruction to the tune of millions of dollars every year. Founded in 1993 by a folk singer and a lawyer who shared a concern about logging practices destroying a place they loved, Bark's vision is to bring about transformation of Mt. Hood National Forest into a place where natural processes prevail, where wildlife thrives, and where local communities have an investment in its preservation. With your help, Bark can shift public lands management away from destructive logging to restoring our public watersheds and wildlands.

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 by persistent outcry



**I**n January of 2001, after thirty years of debate and the largest public participation process in US history, the Roadless Area Conservation Rule was signed into law. The Roadless Rule, as enacted, protects the last intact forests on America's National Forest System, their wildlife habitat, their clean air and water, their opportunities for recreation and their unspoiled open spaces for current and future generations of Americans.

But now the Bush administration is threatening to unravel the rule, opening these last wild forests once more to road construction and logging.

If the Bush administration reverses the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, more than a million acres of intact wild roadless areas on Oregon's national forests would immediately be opened logging and road-building.

This report profiles some of the roadless areas we have lost in Oregon prior to the enactment of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, and just a few of the roadless areas we stand to lose should the rule be reversed.

Please, contact Dale Bosworth, Chief of the US Forest Service and ask him to keep the Roadless Area Conservation Rule intact, and to protect America's last wild forests. Forever.

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