The Watershed

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Court overturns roadless rule repeal!

In a stunning victory for American wilderness and wildlife, a federal judge in San Francisco has thrown out the Bush administration's repeal of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule and reinstated the Clinton-era regulation protecting 58.5 million acres of roadless federal lands.

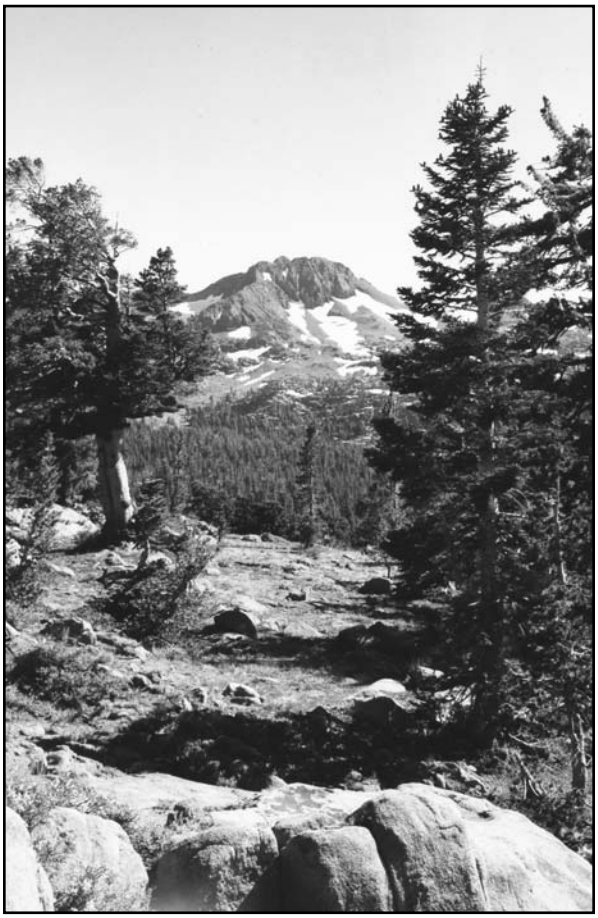
Magistrate Judge Elizabeth Laporte of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California on Sept. 19 ruled that the U.S. Forest Service had acted illegally by repealing the original roadless rule without conducting an environmental review as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and for failing to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service, as required under the Endangered Species Act.

"The (Bush administration's) State Petitions Rule is set aside and the roadless rule, including the Tongass Amendment, is reinstated," Laporte's opinion states.

Forests Forever Foundation was one of 20 conservation groups that filed suit in October 2005.

The federal agencies, Laporte wrote, "are enjoined from taking any further action contrary to the roadless rule without undertaking environmental analysis consistent with this opinion."

photo courtesy Heritage Forest Campaign



Roadless area in Eldorado National Forest, California.

News of the rule's reinstatement brought joyful reactions from environmentalists.

"The court's reinstatement of the original roadless rule is an exhilarating development," said Paul Hughes, executive director of Forests Forever. "In tossing out the Bush administration's attempt to open the national forests to logging and development, the court is also reflecting the opinion of the majority of Americans, who have said repeatedly, in polls and in public comments on the rule in record numbers, that they want the roadless forests of this country protected."

Although the original rule is reinstated, the judge's ruling allowed the Bush administration's 2003 exemption of Tongass National Forest from roadless rule protections to stand. Located in southeast Alaska, the Tongass boasts 9.3 million acres of roadless area.

"It's unfortunate that the Tongass Amendment was retained," noted Forests Forever Board of Directors President Mark Fletcher. "The exemption of these pristine forests by the Bush administration was a warm-up for the repeal of the entire rule, and they deserve protection along with the

See "Roadless," p. 12

Inside The Watershed

from the Executive Director

Warming it up in the Goldilocks Zone:

Can California's forests take the heat?

One idea put forward by advocates of making Mars habitable for colonists or refugees from Earth is to start by growing plants on the Red Planet's polar ice caps.

Dark, radiation-loving, and able to make copies of themselves, specially adapted plants would warm the caps, melting their trapped waters and beginning the formation of an atmosphere.

We seem to be taking this process in reverse here on Earth these days, stripping our forests and desertifying the place like there's no tomorrow.

Human-induced global warming– a fact now endorsed by virtually every reputable climate scientist– is widely understood to have a lot to do with how we have treated our forests over the last couple centuries.

And while deforestation contributes enormously to global warming, at the same time the warming hurts forests. California's iconic forests are where this vicious cycle may be most evident in the United States in coming decades.

Some people assume that forests, like people, will be able to migrate reasonably quickly if their native climate warms up too much. While the Ents in the movie *Lord of the Rings* were able to do something along these lines, we should be reminded that in the real world forest migration may take millennia, where it occurs at all.

In California, the San Francisco Bay has represented a natural barrier for both northward and southward-migrating species of all kinds, forests included. The vast farms of the Central Valley are another, newer, obstacle.

California's most important timber tree, *Douglas-fir,* needs winter chill conditions for germination and growth. Increased Doug fir mortality on account of global warming will not only pressure the state's timber industry, but also increase the fuel load in the forests.

"Earth occupies the one place where we have the best chance of making sure it stays not too hot and not too cold."

California's beloved *coast redwoods* are arguably already a relict species– that is, pressed to the very margins of a formerly much wider range and now barely hanging on. They will face an uncertain future as the moist coastal redwood region, which now provides 7 to 12 inches of the redwoods' annual water budget through fog drip alone, becomes warmer and drier.

Our *giant sequoias* currently occupy a "sky island" surrounded by deserts and semi-arid ranchlands. More than a century of industrial logging– still continuing– has dried and thinned out these forests, subjecting the giants to regeneration challenges and blowdown.

As in many other forests, the sequoias to a large extent create and sustain their own relatively cool, moist environment. Removal of the sequoias' shading, moisture-trapping canopy will make it harder for them to hang on to the ground they already occupy.

You may be thinking by now: Where does it end? Scientists call a process that produces cascading, self-amplifying effects a "positive feedback loop." It's a sort of downhill race that could theoretically spin out of control.

Which brings us to our planetary neighbor one orbit closer to the Sun. On Venus a runaway greenhouse effect has pushed planetary temperatures to 890 degrees Fahrenheit– hot enough to melt lead. And while no one has yet found evidence of ancient rusting power plants or Hummers there, Venus remains a disquieting reminder of just how pleasant our mistreated planetary home is by comparison.

In the comfortable middle space between Mars and Venus lies what astrobiologists call the "Goldilocks zone." Here Earth occupies the one place where we have the best chance of making sure it stays not too hot and not too cold for life as we know it.

In the face of what may well be the greatest challenge ever to the survival of life on Earth, managing our forests with greater care would seem to be something much easier to do than moving to a planet next door.

— Paul Hughes

Historic emissions limits bill passes

True to its frequent role on the cutting edge of new developments, cultural and political, California has stepped into the lead in the fight against global warming.

The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (A.B. 32), introduced by Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez (D-Los Angeles) and Assemblymember Fran Pavley (D-Woodland Hills) and signed by Gov. Arnold Shwarzenegger on Sept. 27, makes reductions in greenhouse gas emissions mandatory, giving force to targets issued last year by Schwarzenegger.

The act's objective is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the state to 1990 levels, or 25 percent of the level currently expected by 2020.

These limits will be phased in gradually. By 2008 the state Air Resources Board will have established greenhouse-gas emissions levels based on the levels in 1990. This will be used as a standard against which to measure future emissions.

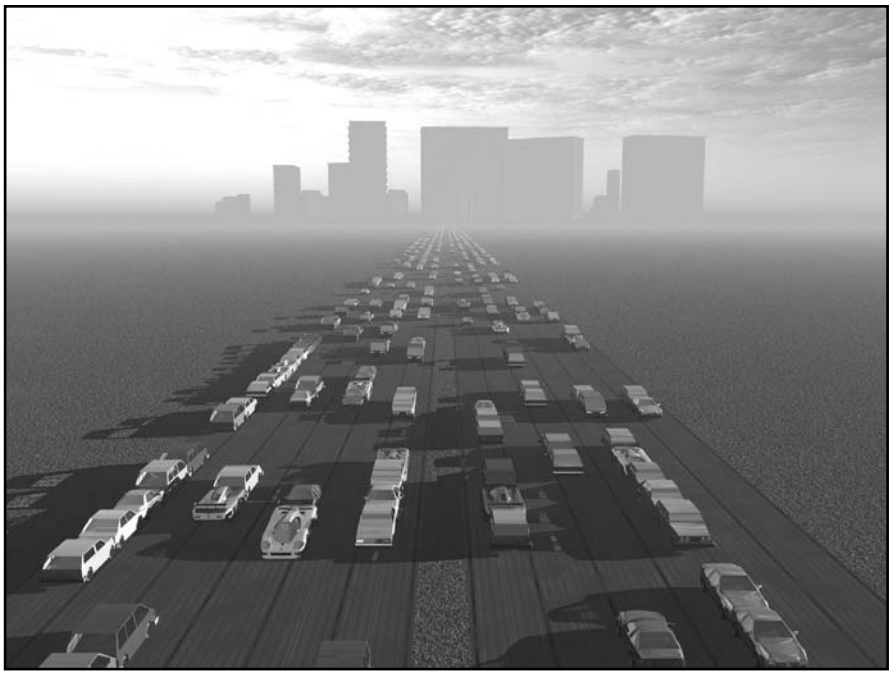


Photo by Dru Doran. © BigStockPhotos.com

California is the twelfth-largest producer of greenhouse gases in the world.

Beginning in 2010 the board will enforce interim limits that will progressively reduce emissions levels until the 2020 cap is reached.

After lengthy negotiations between the governor's office and the bill's legislative sponsors, the measure was passed by the Assembly on the last day of the session, Aug. 31. Almost a month later the governor signed it into law.

A.B. 32 encountered heavy opposition from business, energy companies and utilities. In an article in the *Sacramento Bee* (8/17/06), for example, the California Chamber of Commerce complained that A.B. 32 would drive business out of the state.

Supporters of the bill have countered that these costs will pale by comparison to the cost of doing nothing.

"If left unchecked, global climate change threatens California's air quality, water supply, public health, power grid reliability, and largest industries, including agriculture, tourism, skiing, and forestry," the bill's sponsors wrote in an analysis presented to fellow lawmakers.

California's forests would suffer greatly from global warming. Hotter, drier weather will mean more wildfires. Changes in the amount of precipitation may leave forests more vulnerable to pest outbreaks, with more dead trees and greater likelihood of catastrophic fires. Some species of trees may find that there is little or no suitable habitat left.

Worldwide, deforestation has contributed an estimated 25 to 30 percent to the greenhouse effect, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report. (See "Warming world," page 4).

"California will be a very different place if something isn't done now to head off or at least mitigate human-caused climate change," said Mark Fletcher, president of Forests Forever's board of directors.

Schwarzenegger issued an executive order last year that outlined emissions reduction goals similar to those in A.B. 32. The legislation will make these limits mandatory, however, and the Air Resources Board will be empowered to assess legal penalties.

Being a leader in controlling greenhouse gas emissions will likely bring other advantages to the state in the near future. There will be a need for new transportation and energy technologies that can reduce these emissions, or never generate them in the first place. California can be the source of this new technology, generating jobs and revenue in the process.

"This legislation will actually build a fire under the start-up of new businesses in California," Fletcher said.

Some critics wonder how much one state can affect what is after all a problem of global proportions. California, with the world's eighth largest economy, is also its 12th largest contributor of greenhouse gas emissions.

Already Schwarzenegger and British Prime Minister Tony Blair have begun high-profile discussions on ways to reduce emissions and establish a market for carbon credit trading, bypassing an intransigent Bush administration.

Forests Forever began campaigning for A.B. 32 in July, reaching out through its phone canvass program to supporters around the state, and calling attention to the bill on our website and in press releases, email blasts and action alerts.

—*M.L.*

educational feature

Warming world, changing forests

Global warming: It's here, it's hot, and it's our fault

No credible scientist disputes any more that the planet is heating up, and only a few politicians and oil industry flacks still deny that human beings are driving climate change, primarily through their use of fossil fuels.

The signs are manifold: melting glaciers, collapsing ice fields in Antarctica, melting sea ice in the Arctic, tropical storms increasing in violence and frequency. The rise in sea levels predicted over the next century will inundate low-lying islands and flood coastal regions. Weather patterns are shifting. Plants and animals have begun to migrate, following climate shifts that have made their former habitats less livable.

The world's forests will affect and be affected by these changes as well.

Photo courtesy NASA Earth Observatory

This tropical forest has been burned to clear the land for agriculture. Burning releases the carbon stored in the trees– and cropland will absorb less CO_2 than the forest it has replaced.

Soak it up

Forests are an important part of the carbon cycle, the exchange of carbon-based molecules that is constantly occurring among living things, the land, the oceans and the atmosphere.

Trees use sunlight to produce sugars through a process called photosynthesis. At the same time, trees absorb atmospheric carbon– carbon dioxide, the primary greenhouse gas. Trees and forest soils hold on to this carbon. This storage is called carbon sequestration.

When forests are cut down, not only do photosynthesis and carbon absorption stop, but the stored carbon is released into the atmosphere when the trees rot or burn.

Cutting down and burning forests

Deforestation is an important factor in global climate change, as well as causing loss of biodiversity and diminishing water quality and quantity.

According to a 2000 special report on land use and forestry from the authoritative Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 1.6 billion tons of carbon dioxide a year are released to the atmosphere due to deforestation (cutting and burning of forests).

Until the early 1900s deforestation was the main source of increased CO_2 in the atmosphere. Since that time, the burning of fossil fuels has produced more greenhouse gases. But land-use change (mostly deforestation) is estimated to be responsible for up to 25 to 30 percent of CO_2 emissions, according to a 2001 IPCC report.

The most common reason for deforestation is conversion of the land to agricultural use. You might think that replacing trees with farm crops would make no difference to atmospheric greenhouse gases, since all plants absorb and store carbon.

But forests can store between 20 and 100 times more carbon than croplands.

Tropical vs. temperate

Forests in temperate zones were the first to be converted for agricultural use. In the past 50 years, however, the fastest rates of deforestation have taken place in tropical regions as impoverished nations have converted their land for farming and grazing. Rates of tropical deforestation increased between 50 and 90 percent in the 1980s.

In tropical forests, the cheapest and most common method of converting forest land to agriculture is the "slash and burn" technique. Burning forests releases enormous amounts of CO_2 into the atmosphere. Coupled with the loss of carbon sequestration, this burning plays a major role in the greenhouse effect.

How the land is used after it is cleared may be the most important factor in determining the role played by deforestation in global warming. A 1991 study shows 90 percent of deforested tropical regions becoming farms or ranchland, while only 10 percent was replanted for future timber harvests.

Trading trees?

The Kyoto Protocol is an amendment to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change. It requires its 164 signatory nations (the United States conspicuously absent from the list) to reduce their emissions of carbon dioxide and five other greenhouse gases to around 5 percent below 1990 levels.

A controversial aspect of the Kyoto Protocol negotiations was whether to take the carbon-absorbing capacities of forest lands into account in regulating a nation's carbon dioxide emissions.

There are still unresolved questions about how to account for a gain or loss of carbon-absorbing forest "sinks." For example, should harvesting timber count as part of a nation's emissions because of the resulting loss in carbon-absorbing forest? And should re-planting deforested areas count as emissions "credits"? Should foregoing a purportedly planned timber harvest be counted as an emissions credit?

While a forest can "lock up" carbon temporarily, the way that a forest is managed can increase or decrease its capacity. Clearcutting not only removes carbon-absorbing trees, but also allows the CO_2 stored in the soil to escape. Thinning and fertilizing forests may also increase their ability to store carbon.

But undisturbed forests reach an equilibrium after about 100 years, with the amount of carbon they absorb roughly equaling the amount they release into the atmosphere.

Heating up California forests

The climate scientists who contributed to *Our Changing Climate: Assessing the Risks to California* (The California Climate Change Center, 2005) came up with three scenarios that try to predict the possible effects of global warming on California. They looked at what might happen to the state under low, medium, and high temperature changes. Unpleasant effects were forecast under every scenario.

Among the predictions: declining air quality and more days of severe heat, leading to "two or threes times more heat-related deaths."

Clearcutting not only removes carbon-absorbing trees, but also allows the carbon dioxide stored in the soil to escape.

At the high-temperature scenario, up to 90 percent of the Sierra snowpack may disappear. Since the Sierra is the most important source of California's water supply, this would lead to severe shortages. California farmers could lose as much as 25 percent of their water supply.

Traveling trees

An important effect of increasing temperatures will be the shift in ecosystems as plant and animal species attempt to migrate to stay within a livable climate and habitat.

But many species may not be able to move if their habitat no longer exists. Species adapted to an alpine climate, for instance, might not be able to find comparable conditions anywhere.

And in the most populated state in the country, a considerable amount of the natural landscape has already been fragmented by development– housing, shopping malls, highways. So even if suitable habitat exists somewhere, species may be blocked in their attempts to migrate to it.

More fires, more often

Another consequence of hotter, drier summers could be an increase in the number of severe forest fires in California. As the state heats up, forests will tend to shift northward and uphill to cooler climes. Some scientists fear the forests may not be able to migrate rapidly enough, leaving large areas of dry, dying trees susceptible to intense blazes.

Changes in rainfall and water flow could cause drought conditions in some parts of the state. Without sufficient water, forests also would be stressed and more vulnerable to damaging insects.

El Niño

A rise in "El Niño-like" storms and more flooding in coastal and delta areas is predicted by several studies.

It is also possible (though still uncertain) that changes in surface ocean temperature could affect the frequency and density of coastal fog. If this scenario came to pass, coastal redwoods, which get much of their moisture from fog drip, could eventually disappear from the coast ranges.

In the case of long-lived trees such as the redwoods, the damage might not be immediately apparent.

"Individual redwoods may survive for centuries, even millennia," according to *Confronting Climate Change in California,* a report from the Union of Concerned Scientists website (updated on

See "Warming world," p. 11

Bill would boost salvage logging

It claims forests need logging to help them recover

A bill now in Congress would make it easier than ever for loggers to strip a forest after it burns.

Reps. Greg Walden (R-OR) and Brian Baird (D-WA) introduced the Forest Emergency Recovery and Research Act (H.R. 4200) on November 2005. The measure would put timber harvest projects on a fast track after "natural disasters" such as wildfire, allowing them to bypass National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) provisions requiring public participation.

The Walden bill would apply to logging projects in national forests after very broadly defined "catastrophic events, " including drought, insect outbreaks, floods, and windstorms. These events are defined so vaguely that the provisions of the bill could be triggered by a heavy rain.

It also would allow fast-tracked logging in roadless areas and old-growth forests.

"It makes you wonder," said Mark Fletcher, president of the board of Forests Forever. "How did forests survive all those eons without the Forest Service around to log them after they burned?"

Walden's bill would allow the U.S. Forest Service to dispense with the usual requirements under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service to determine the effect of logging on threatened wildlife. The bill allows impacts on endangered species to be weighed only after a project is completed– when it would be too late.

A decision to log a parcel would have to be made in 30 days. The Forest Service could fulfill public participation requirements simply by publishing a notice. The bill's suggestion that the Forest Service "foster collaboration" is as vague as its definition of "catastrophic events." After 30 days the project could begin immediately.

The bill's boosters say that logging, roadbuilding, and tree planting are needed after forest fire to help the forest recover. But many scientists say there is no need to log a forest after a burn.

In fact, scientific studies have suggested that logging could cause more harm than good, and actually delay recovery. Heavy equipment compacts the soil and damages root systems, while erosion from ground exposed by logging can harm stream quality.

Harvesting burned and dead trees removes nutrients from the forest ecosystem, delaying recovery.

Logging increases the likelihood of forest fires, leaving behind debris from the cut timber ("slash"), which is highly flammable. And by taking out the biggest trees, loggers remove the trees most resistant to wildfire.

Replacing natural forests with monoculture tree plantations is an invitation to fire and disease.

Alarmed at the Walden bill's lack of a scientific foundation for post-disturbance logging, 587 scientists around the country on Aug. 1 signed a letter that was sent to Congress.

"No substantive evidence supports the idea that fire-adapted forests might be improved by logging after a fire," the letter says.

To fund these unneeded recovery projects, H.R. 4200 would divert money from fire prevention work near threatened communities. Moreover, salvage-logging timber sales end up costing the taxpayer money.

The final argument against H.R. 4200 is that it is unnecessary. Post-fire logging projects that follow the requirements of NEPA or the ESA have accounted for around 34 percent of logging volume from national forests in recent years.

The bill passed the House on May 17 and is now in the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry.

—M.L.

Photo courtesy USDA/Bob Nichols

Forests have eons of practice at recovering after a fire, and don't need any help.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Write your California senators and urge them to oppose H.R. 4200.

Sen. Barbara Boxer
1700 Montgomery St., #240
San Francisco, CA 94111

Sen. Dianne Feinstein
One Post St., #2450
San Francisco, CA 94104

Hard times for hardwoods

Janet Santos Cobb is as tough as the trees she defends

California oak trees have a friend and advocate in Janet Santos Cobb.

The California oak is often taken for granted. When most people think of California trees, the majestic redwood or perhaps the giant sequoia probably come to mind. Yet the tree that best defines the state's landscape, both rural and urban, is the oak.

Until the advent of Sudden Oak Death syndrome (SODS) in the mid-1990s, the oak was assumed to be as eternal as the Pacific Ocean. The emergence of the still-unconquered disease, which kills oaks and other kinds of trees, raised public awareness of oaks. But after a few months of media focus on SODS, the oak appears to have sunk back into obscurity.

Which is one of the many things worrying Cobb, president and executive officer of the California Oak Foundation. Founded in 1988, the organization champions oak trees and oak woodlands throughout the state, and Cobb's name has become synonymous with oak woodland preservation.

"We're just trying to get people to go from the single oak tree to thinking about oak woodlands and oak forests," says Cobb. "That's what we're trying to do: to take people from their love of a single tree to seeing that this is an ecosystem that covers 10 to 13 million acres."

Cobb has a history of many years of activism and fighting City Hall as a campaigner for environmental issues. Her tireless efforts on behalf of California's oaks and her devotion to wilderness areas have earned her a reputation among forest lovers as a tough, sometimes outspoken but always graceful "troublemaker."

Born in Nebraska, Cobb grew up in the then-rural hills of the Pinole Valley in the Bay Area, riding horses, cleaning stables and feeding her parents' chickens. A degree in journalism from San Francisco State University in the late 1970s led her to work for several political campaigns in the early 1980s, picking up an MA in radio and TV along the way. But it was her time as assistant general manager of the East Bay Regional Parks District that she sees as pivotal in her work for the environment.

Photo by Julian Allen

Janet Cobb, moving spirit of the California Oaks Foundation.

She co-founded the California Oak Foundation in 1988 and has been its president since 1994, orchestrating the group's activities from its downtown Oakland office. In addition, she is executive officer of the California Wildlife Foundation and is a member of the boards of directors or advisory councils of Forests Forever, Save San Francisco Bay, the Urban Wildlands Group and the Planning and Conservation League (of which she is past president). She served on the Berkeley Waterfront Commission and, as the past president of the Yosemite Restoration Trust (now merged with the National Parks Conservation Association), she fought for reduced human impact on Yosemite Valley for 20 years.

"I'm an advocate through and through," she says. Her aim is to show "how you can get people from damaging things to looking after their own best interests."

She also managed to find time to raise eight children, some her own, some adopted, all now grown up, and lives today on a houseboat in the Berkeley Marina.

Sudden Oak Death syndrome may have got a lot of publicity but Cobb doesn't see it as the gravest threat to California oaks.

"Everybody loves a disease. We go towards a disaster. People just love the thought of threat. I'd like people to focus instead on the worthiness of the living, healthy oak tree.

"It's about the challenge of getting people to understand that a healthy tree still standing is very, very important and, if they are healthy enough, they will survive this disease. I have a lot of faith in oaks. They're pretty ornery trees.

"None of the forestry diseases have ever been stopped by Man. You can't stop it once it gets going. We can look at different treatments but what we really should be looking at is the health of the soil. I mean, that should interest us from the point of view of our own survival.

"Certainly we should be doing all we can to stop the spread of the disease. For instance, we shouldn't be introducing non-native species into a native landscape because they can act as vectors for the disease. We should all be more mindful of where we are on

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the planet and how we behave around these trees. And we should really focus on what we're doing with rampant development into the oak woodlands."

More recently, global warming projections that predict the Napa Valley will become too hot to be a viable environment for viticulture by the end of this century fueled speculation that the big wine producers would move their wineries westward, with attendant clearcutting of vast tracts of oak woodlands. But Cobb feels this misses the point:

Photo by Charles Webber. © California Academy of Sciences

California live oak

"Most of the damage from the wineries has already happened. There's been a glut and a lot of people are having to dump their grapes. My worry is that, if the economics don't work out very well, that those lands will be converted to housing. Existing vineyards will be permanently converted and will become part of a great sprawl picture. I would hope that the vintners themselves would somehow organize themselves to guarantee that these lands be kept in agriculture. That would be a very big challenge, but if they replanted those lands with oak trees and became part of the climate registry, it would be better than planting houses there."

Even government agencies tasked with the stewardship of our forests can constitute a threat to the oak trees.

"We have sued in a case against the U.S. Forest Service where they were going to spray herbicides on black oaks in the Larsen tract of the Stanislaus National Forest. They would kill the oaks and replace them with a plantation of conifers. It's even against the Forest Service's own plans."

But she feels that the foundation has succeeded in raising awareness in much of the public sector. "The exciting thing is that many of the non-profits and agencies are now really working to save the oak ecosystem because they realize how important it is to all the other species."

"I have a lot of faith in oaks. They're pretty ornery trees."

So, what is the most imminent threat to California's oak population? Not Sudden Oak Death syndrome, the wineries or even the Forest Service, according to Cobb.

"Sprawl" is the culprit, she says. A combination of burgeoning population growth and poor land-use policies are gobbling up the woodlands at a record pace, creating irreversible and potentially cataclysmic changes to the environment. Some 20,000 acres of California oaks are converted every year to housing, highways and shopping malls.

"Everyone in LA thinks they have to have a place in the Sierra and those landscapes are changing fast. If we have all our food imported from abroad and what we're growing are these tract houses on our prime soil, that's not really sustainable for our future.

"We are flat-footed when it comes to good planning. Several bills are before the legislature, including the global warming bill which caps the output of carbon. (See "Historic emissions limits bill passes" on page 3.) It is very important that the governor sign that but it's difficult to get these things through the legislature."

One important bill that did make it through was the Oak Woodlands Protection Act. The act was signed into law by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2004. It requires counties to consider the effects of development projects on oak trees and provides developers with a menu of mitigations.

The Oak Woodlands Protection Act was an important campaign for Forests Forever as well. Between November 2003 and the bill's passage, the organization generated 8,975 letters and calls to legislators and the governor in support of it.

Current state laws designed to protect the oaks are a step in the right direction but don't go far enough, Cobb says.

"I would like to see oaks protected in California. I have a friend who says 'Kill an Oak, Go to Jail.' Maybe that's not going to happen, but inch-by-inch we're pushing local ordinances and working on statewide legislation and I'm never going to not work on regulating them."

Cobb expresses the situation succinctly: "You have 10 million acres of oaks out of about 100 million acres [in California]. A lot of wildlife and a lot of our systems depend on those oak trees standing and so I think it's in our best interests to keep as many of them standing as possible." *—Julian Allen*

For more information about oak woodlands and forests and how to help preserve them, visit the California Oak Foundation's web site at http://www.californiaoaks.org/

Forests between covers:

Forests Forever's first book nears its debut

When is an environmental organization like a proud parent in the maternity ward? When its first book is about to be delivered.

We're getting ready to hand out the cigars.

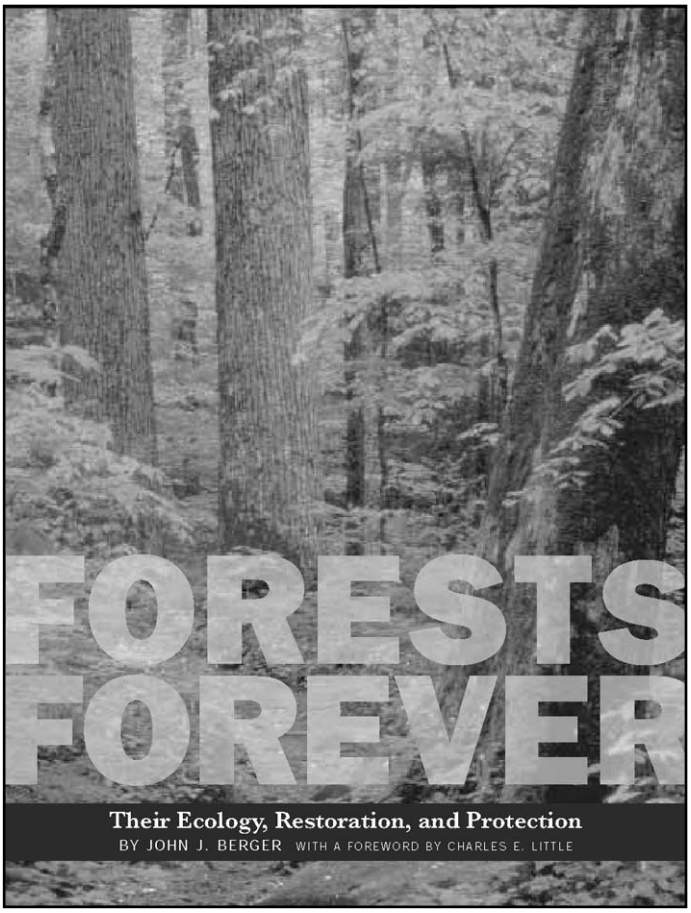
Forests Forever: Their Ecology, Restoration and Protection is fast approaching its due date. The handsome volume, illustrated with black-and-white and full-color forest photography from some of the biggest names in the field, surveys the current sylvan landscape.

In jargon-free language that the non-specialist will have no trouble understanding, *Forests Forever* explains how forests function ecologically, how current logging practices are destroying them, and how– with time, care, and knowledge– they can be restored.

At 288 pages, this new edition adds 100 pages of text to the previous version (which appeared from Sierra Club Press in 1998 as *Understanding Forests*). In this expanded edition, charts, illustrations, and historical photos have been added throughout the text. A 36-page gallery of full-color photographs is included as well, with work from such nature photographers as Gary Braasch, Daniel Dancer, Herb Hammond, and Larry Ulrich.

Author John Berger, an environmental consultant and scholar who has followed forestry issues for a long time, also takes a hard look at the government's approach to forestry, carefully examining the destructive policies emanating from the Bush administration.

Dr. George M. Woodwell, a world-renowned expert on forests and global climate change, has written of *Forests Forever:* "I am impressed with the importance of th[is] book as a contemporary statement of the . . . management of publicly owned . . . forests in the U.S. . . . It is a smashing, timely, and totally appropriate indictment of the corruption of the public interest . . . by an administration totally devoted to corporate welfare at public expense."



The cover design has not been finalized by press time, but this version gives an idea of Forests Forever*'s visual impact.*

An introduction to the volume has been provided by environmental policy analyst, journalist and author Charles Little. His widely read book *The Dying of the Trees* (Viking Press, 1995) focused the country's attention on a problem few were aware of at the time– trees all around the country were dying from a long menu of causes.

Recently the growing awareness of global warming and a sense of the environment's fragility and peril has brought a fresh round of attention to *The Dying of the Trees.* Little was even visited by a Michael Moore film crew.

Little's introduction to *Forests Forever* serves to connect Berger's book to a long line of attractive, eye-catching books that have alerted the public to the dangers faced by forests. People need to be reminded periodically of their importance, beauty, and vulnerability.

Forests Forever is the first volume to appear in Forests Forever's publishing program. Our plans for the future include children's books, an activist handbook, and much more.

Our hope is that *Forests Forever* will enable more people to know about forests, to care about their preservation, and to take action to bring it about.

The photographic dust jacket and cover design is almost complete (see picture). Several other versions are being considered but, whichever is chosen, the book is sure to be visually striking.

The book should be available for pre-order by Christmas. The prestigious University of Chicago Press (UCP) will distribute *Forests Forever* nationwide, listing the book in its Fall 2006 catalog, although UCP is announcing it as not available until March 2007.

Keep an eye on the Forests Forever book pages on our website (http://www.forestsforever.org/ConciseGuide.html) for updates.

—M.L.

Judge tosses Sequoia Monument logging plan

Calling the U.S. Forest Service's scheme for managing Giant Sequoia National Monument "incomprehensible," a federal judge recently threw out the Forest Service's management plan for the area.

The Aug. 22 ruling in San Francisco was part of Judge Charles Breyer's decision on two lawsuits against logging in the monument– one brought by Bill Lockyer, the California attorney general, and the other by the Sierra Club and several other environmental groups.

The attorney general had sued the Forest Service over its plan, saying that it violated previous agreements between the state and federal governments.

The Sierra Club suit was based on the environmental harm the agency's logging would cause in the monument, especially to habitat of the Pacific fisher, a candidate for the federal list of endangered species.

Breyer further ruled that the management plan did not comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

In a July 2005 ruling on an earlier suit brought by the attorney general, the judge found that the Forest Service's fire plan for Sequoia National Forest was illegal.

The Sequoia National Forest entirely encompasses the monument, where logging had been going forward under this plan. Also in July, the judge halted the 1,160-acre Ice timber sale.

Then in September the judge granted a preliminary injunction against the 2,000-acre Saddle Project, a timber sale in the monument packaged as a "fuels-reduction project." This sale would have removed five million board feet, from trees up to 30 inches in diameter.

The two timber sales were stopped after court challenges in 2005 by the John Muir Project, Sequoia ForestKeeper and the Sierra Club.

With August's ruling, Breyer not only threw out the forest management plan, but also tossed out four expired timber contracts that were in place when President Bill Clinton proclaimed the monument in April 2000.

Photo by Martin Litton

This clearcut in Giant Sequoia National Monument shows the effects of erosion.

Legislative end run

The courts may have struck down the timber sales inside the monument, but at least one area politician wants to raise them from the dead.

Rep. Devin Nunes (R-Tulare) introduced H.R. 5760, the "Giant Sequoia National Monument Transition Act of 2006" on July 11.

The legislation would override the 2005 court decisions and allow the Forest Service to start up the logging projects again. The bill also would forestall any future appeals.

The decree by Clinton protected 327,769 acres of southern Sierra forest– including half the remaining sequoia groves on the planet– and prohibited logging in the monument. Timber sales already authorized were allowed to proceed so long as they were completed within two and a half years.

The Forest Service extended this deadline, however, citing poor prices for timber. Then in 2005 the agency claimed that fire safety required immediate fuels reduction, and allowed logging to begin.

Nunes' bill also would place a fuels-reduction project, the Kings River Research Project, in Sierra National Forest, on a fast track, exempting it from the requirements of NEPA.

Let the Park Service do it

This latest attempt at logging in the monument has intensified calls to transfer the monument from the Forest Service to the National Park Service.

"The Park Service is capable of treating these treasures with care and respect," said Paul Hughes, executive director of Forests Forever. "The Forest Service apparently is not."

The Act to Save America's Forests (S. 1897) was introduced last year in the Senate by Sens. Jon Corzine (D-NJ) and Christopher Dodd (D-CT), and has just been introduced in the House by Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-CA) as H.R 6237. The bill would place the monument under the Park Service's control.

Forests Forever campaigned for the act's introduction for 10 months, beginning last September, and generated thousands of constituent messages supporting the bill.

There are 99 national monuments in the country; the Forest Service administers six of them. But the agency has neither the expertise nor the inclination to restore natural ecosystems. The Park Service, on the other hand, has nearly a century of experience in preserving national monuments, many of which have become national parks.

—M.L.

The Watershed

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Paul Hughes
Executive Editor

Marc Lecard
Editor

Gary Bentrup
Flag Artwork

Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper

FORESTS FOREVER

50 First St., Suite 401
San Francisco, CA 94105
phone (415) 974-3636
fax (415) 974-3664
mail@forestsforever.org
www.forestsforever.org

"Restore, Reinhabit, Re-enchant"

"Warming world," continued from page 5

8/10/05), "long past the point where climate changes make growth of new seedlings impossible."

Forests thus doomed are known as "museum" populations, wherein individual trees seem healthy but are no longer able to reproduce.

Win some, lose some

As some global warming naysayers like to point out, the increase in carbon dioxide, and the warmer average temperatures, could actually increase forest productivity– at least in the short run. But drier climate, changes in water flow, increased frequency and severity of forest fires, and increased vulernability to pest outbreaks would likely cancel out these gains.

Photo courtesy USDA/Bob Nichols

More and more intense forest fires are one predicted effect of global climate change.

While the world's forests may help soak up the immense overload of fossil fuel carbon human beings have pumped into the atmosphere over the past 150 years, they too will eventually fall victim to rising temperatures. Exchanging forests for deserts is not anyone's idea of a good trade.

Losing our carbon habit

An Inconvenient Truth, Al Gore's epochal 2006 documentary film about global warming, is bringing the facts about global warming to a wider audience. Awareness of the problem is spreading rapidly, and– finally– being taken ever more seriously. Even some corporations in the energy industry have admitted that global warming is a real and urgent issue.

California is about to become the first state in the country to enact limits on greenhouse gas emissions that are driving climate change. (See "Historic emissions limits bill passes," page 3.)

But national leadership remains out of touch on the issue. President George W. Bush has refused to sign the Kyoto Protocol, and his administration still has not made any concrete proposals to regulate greenhouse gases.

But something needs to be done, soon, if we are to avoid very disruptive, and possibly permanent changes to the climate of the only planet we've got.

—M.L.

"Roadless," continued from page 1

rest of the country's wild forests.

"But it's good to have the roadless rule back in force. This will help protect our remaining roadless forests."

The Roadless Area Conservation Rule protected 58.5 million roadless acres of federal forest from roadbuilding, logging, drilling, mining, and other development.

The roadless rule was one of the most popular environmental rules ever written. More than 1.2 million Americans commented on the rule after it was first proposed in 1998, with more than 95 percent of them supporting its ban on new roadbuilding in public forests.

Photo courtesy Martin Litton

Logging road and post-cut debris in Giant Sequoia National Monument.

The 2001 rule was formally repealed by the Bush administration in May of 2005.

The State Petitions Rule that replaced the roadless rule forced state governors to petition the U.S. Department of Agriculture if they wanted to protect roadless areas in their states.

The new rule gave no assurance that the petitions would be granted, however. If a petition were to be rejected, land-use decisions would have defaulted to individual forest management plans. Nationally, 56 percent of such plans allow for development in roadless areas.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger of California recently filed a petition under the Bush rule that would have protected all 4.4 million roadless acres in the state's national forests.

In August 2005, the attorneys general of California, New Mexico and Oregon filed a lawsuit asking the court to reinstate the original roadless rule. Washington joined the suit this year, and attorneys general from Maine and Montana filed friend of the court briefs.

The two lawsuits were consolidated this year.

The environmentalists' lawsuit was filed by Earthjustice on behalf of The Wilderness Society, California Wilderness Coalition, Forests Forever Foundation, Northcoast Environmental Center, Oregon Natural Resources Fund, Sitka Conservation Society, Siskiyou Regional Education Project, Biodiversity Conservation Alliance, Sierra Club, National Audubon Society, Greater Yellowstone Coalition, Center for Biological Diversity, Environmental Protection Information Center, Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center, Defenders of Wildlife, Pacific Rivers Council, Idaho Conservation League, Conservation NW, and Greenpeace.

—M.L

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Forests Forever
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