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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 27, 2006

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Federal Court to Hear Arguments for Protecting Roadless Areas

What: Roadless Rule Repeal hearing

When: Tuesday, August 1, 9:00 a.m.

Where: Courtroom E, Fifteenth Floor
Federal Building
450 Golden Gate Ave.
San Francisco, CA

Who: Magistrate Judge Elizabeth Laporte
Attorneys for states of California, Oregon, Washington, New Mexico
Attorneys for environmental organizations
Attorneys for the U.S. Department of Justice

Why: States and conservation groups will present arguments explaining
why the Bush administration's 2005 repeal of the immensely popular roadless area
protection rule violates the law.

The states and conservation groups are asking the court to find the Bush repeal
invalid and to reinstate the Roadless Rule. The 2005 Roadless Repeal, adopted
with no environmental analysis and limited public input, replaced a Clinton-era
rule adopted in January 2001 after a three-year process that included 600 public
hearings and 1.6 million public comments.

In addition to repealing the roadless rule, the Bush rule invites governors to
submit petitions recommending management schemes for the national forests in

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their states. To date, five states (Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, New Mexico, and California) have lodged such petitions, and all call for protection for all roadless areas in their states. None of these petitions have yet been granted.

Other states, including Oregon and Colorado, that have not yet petitioned, are facing Bush administration plans to log or develop oil and gas in roadless areas.

If the court agrees with the states' and conservation groups' arguments, 58.5 million acres of roadless public forests across the country could once again be protected against road building and logging.