



FORESTS FOREVER

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Rep. Anna Eshoo introduces Act to Save America's Forests *Measure would put Sequoia National Monument under Park Service*

The Act to Save America's Forests (H.R. 6237) was introduced on Sept. 27 by Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-Atherton) in the House of Representatives. The bill would, among other things, make the National Park Service the administrator of Giant Sequoia National Monument, removing it from the management of the U.S. Forest Service.

A companion bill, S. 1897 was introduced in the Senate by Sens. Jon Corzine (D-NJ) and Christopher Dodd (D-CT) on Oct. 19, 2005.

Recent court decisions have shut down the Forest Service's logging plans in the monument, home to more than half of the world's remaining giant sequoia groves, but the agency will certainly come up with new plans as destructive as the ones thrown out in court unless the big trees are taken out of its hands.

"The Forest Service record shows that they plan to take timber out of the monument, regardless of negative effects on wildlife and the big trees themselves," said Paul Hughes, executive director of Forests Forever, an environmental organization in San Francisco dedicated to protecting the forests of California.

The 327,769-acre Giant Sequoia National Monument in the southern Sierra was established by President Bill Clinton's proclamation in 2000. The decree explicitly banned logging in the monument, though projects already authorized

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were allowed to continue for two years. The Forest Service has repeatedly extended this deadline, until recent court decisions halted the remaining projects.

“One way to end the legal wrangling with the Forest Service over its timber projects is to take the monument away from them permanently,” Hughes said. “This bill would accomplish that.”

The Forest Service claims that logging is needed to thin the forest and “preserve the ecosystem” in the monument. Yet the Park Service, which manages the adjacent Sequoia National Park, has eschewed logging as a management technique, using prescribed fire to maintain its sequoia groves very successfully.

In addition to placing the monument under the Park Service, the Act to Save America’s Forests would end clearcutting on all federal lands and stop logging and roadbuilding in the last wild roadless forests. It would require federal forest agencies to restore native biological diversity and protect old growth and roadless areas.

Forests Forever has campaigned for more than ten months in support of the Act to Save America’s Forests, H.R. 6237/S. 1897.