



# The Watershed

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## *Forests Forever sues CDF to save Jackson*

The Forests Forever Foundation has joined in a lawsuit against the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF), asserting that the agency's report outlining environmental protection of Jackson Demonstration State Forest violates California law.

Forests Forever's educational arm filed the suit along with co-plaintiff group Campaign to Restore Jackson State Redwood Forest Oct. 24 in Mendocino Superior Court.

The suit contends that the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) accompanying CDF's proposed Jackson management plan contains glaring deficiencies.

If Forests Forever and the Jackson Campaign win the suit CDF will not be able to log in Jackson until the EIR is rewritten to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). That process could take months.

The most significant problem with the Jackson EIR, said Forests Forever Foundation Executive Director Paul Hughes, is its failure to consider the cumulative impacts of Jackson's timber production.

Under CEQA, EIRs must address a project's effects with respect to closely related past, present and future develop-

*see "Lawsuit," p. 10 col. 1*



Jackson State Forest

*photo by Andria Strickley*

## Forestry board approves controversial Jackson plan

The state forestry board has approved a plan that if implemented would clear-cut half of California's largest state-owned forest.

Even as it okayed the document, the board placed restrictions on it that could change significantly the way the California Department of

Forestry (CDF) manages Jackson Forest.

"All the Forests Forever supporters who wrote letters on Jackson deserve a huge pat on the back," said Forests Forever Board President Mark Fletcher. "While we have a lot of work left to do, the caveats placed on CDF by the board of

forestry signal an encouraging shift in attitude toward Jackson.

"The board of forestry seems to have awakened to the fact that CDF can't hide its activities at Jackson from the public anymore."

The California Board of Forestry approved the manage-

ment plan for Jackson—officially called Jackson Demonstration State Forest—in Sacramento Nov. 6 on a 6-1 vote. Written by CDF, the document outlines how the Mendocino-area forest will be used over the next five years or

*see "Jackson," p. 13 col. 1*

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# Bush fire plan would roll back years of environmental protections for forests

President George W. Bush's plan to step up logging on public lands in the name of fire protection would be disastrous for the nation's forests, environmentalists say.

Not only would the plan erode environmental protections, conservation groups say, but also would severely limit public input on forest management decisions.

Bush announced his "Healthy Forests Initiative" in August against the backdrop of the huge Squires Fire in Oregon.

In pushing the plan he said mechanical thinning— a term that includes logging— is needed to prevent disasters such as the Oregon blaze from recurring.

But environmentalists and fire ecology experts say Bush's plan would raise the

risk of fire because it over-emphasizes cutting larger trees. Under the initiative the

U.S. Forest Service would be allowed to log and sell larger trees to pay for other fire-prevention activities.

"Larger trees tend to be more fire-resistant than small ones, so removing them actually increases fire risk," said Paul Hughes, executive director of Forests Forever.

"Big trees create shade, trap moisture and slow breezes that dry out forests."

At press time the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate were considering legislation that would support Bush's initiative. A bill by Rep. Scott McInnis (R-CO) essentially mirroring Bush's proposal had passed the House Resources Committee. No bill



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see "Bush," p. 9 col. 1

## Goldman Fund grants \$25,000 to Forests Forever

The Forests Forever Foundation on Oct. 14 was awarded a \$25,000 grant to educate people across California about the plight of Jackson Forest.

The foundation received the grant from the prestigious Richard & Rhoda Goldman Fund, a family foundation that supports charities primarily in the Bay Area. The fund is perhaps best known for its annual Environmental Prize, which honors grassroots "environmental heroes" from around the globe and attracts major media attention.

"Forests Forever is delighted to have the support of the Goldman Fund," said Forests Forever Foundation Executive Director Paul Hughes. "In the current tough economy foundations have cut back a lot on their giving. For us to be funded at all— especially as a first-time

applicant to Goldman— was a real pleasure."

In 2001 the Forests Forever Foundation

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*The grant will be used primarily for media work and will help establish a web site about Jackson.*

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played a major role in the effort to end large-scale commercial logging in Jackson

Demonstration State Forest. The foundation stimulated and directed public comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report and management plan for Jackson.

The Goldman Fund money is the first grant the Forests Forever Foundation has ever received and flows from the foundation's first serious attempt to solicit grants. The funding will be used chiefly for outreach such as press events, e-mail alerts and meetings with newspaper editorial boards. In addition, the money will help establish a web site focused solely on Jackson.

Through contact information collected on the web site, the foundation plans to establish a broad database of Jackson supporters.

see "Goldman grant," p. 14 col. 1

# Scientists confirm Sudden Oak Death virus infecting redwoods, Douglas firs

Forest advocates' fears were confirmed this fall when researchers announced that the disease killing oak trees across California has infected redwoods and Douglas firs.

First discovered in Marin County in 1995, Sudden Oak Death has killed thousands of trees from Monterey to the Oregon border.

Earlier this year, the pathogen that causes the disease was found on redwood sprouts in Berkeley and Monterey.

At the time of the discovery, scientists were unsure whether the sprouts actually were carrying the disease, or whether the pathogen had traveled to the samples from another source.

In September, researchers from UC Berkeley and UC Davis confirmed that redwood saplings from Sonoma and Santa Cruz counties and Douglas fir saplings from Sonoma County were

infected with the disease.

The researchers also tested diseased sprouts growing from the base of mature redwood trees in Marin, Alameda and Monterey counties. Although it was not confirmed, DNA tests showed the Sudden Oak Death pathogen was likely present in the sprouts.

"Since we haven't seen evidence of disease symptoms or death from the pathogen in large, mature redwood or Douglas fir, we can't say what the effects of the infection will be long-term," said UC Berkeley researcher Matteo



see "Sudden Oak," p. 14 col. 3

Infected Douglas fir

photo courtesy of the University of California

## After years of struggle, plan for embattled Headwaters Forest Preserve nears completion

A federal agency is poised to approve an environmental document describing the fate of the Headwaters Forest Preserve, long one of California's key battlegrounds for ancient forest protection.

The federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in May released a draft management plan for the 7500-acre preserve, which was transferred from private to public hands in 1999. The deal marked the culmination of a 12-year struggle between environmentalists, corporate timber interests, the California legislature and other players. It did not guarantee protection for the forest, however.

Two years of environmental assessments and a period of public comment resulted in the BLM draft management plan. The goal of the plan is to protect and restore the preserve while accommodating public access, education and research.

Protection of the preserve is critical for the survival of species that depend on ancient redwoods, environmentalists say.

"This is an island of high-quality habitat surrounded by industrial timberland that has been hammered over the past two

decades," said Karen Pickett of the Bay Area Coalition for Headwaters.

The final version of the management plan will dictate what types of activities can take place in the preserve, from research to recreation. Headwaters is located about 15 miles southeast of Eureka in

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*"This is an island of high-quality habitat surrounded by industrial timberland..."*

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Humboldt County.

Conservationists generally consider the management plan to be praiseworthy, with a few exceptions. One of the key points environmentalists and BLM disagree about

is how much public access should be allowed in sensitive areas of the Headwaters Grove, the inner sanctum of the preserve.

Forest advocates, for example, oppose BLM's proposed re-routing of a hiking trail into an old-growth stand at the preserve's north end. Environmentalists also want to close the southern access trail until the Marbled murrelet (an old-growth-dependent bird species) population has recovered in the area.

"We who have been active in the Headwaters campaign for all of this time didn't wage this very hard-fought battle because we felt there needed to be more hiking trails in (ancient) redwood forests," Pickett said.

The public comment period on the BLM plan ended Sept. 6. Forests Forever generated more than 270 letters in support of prohibiting access in the preserve's most sensitive areas.

The preserve encompasses the largest

see "Headwaters," p. 14 col. 1

# Coalition fights to preserve ailing national parks

America's national parks are in trouble. Without an annual funding increase of hundreds of millions of dollars the park system will continue to deteriorate from impacts such as overdevelopment and pollution.

To help heal the parks a coalition is working nationwide to encourage Congress and the Bush administration to increase park system funding. Forests Forever is an active member of this group.

Called Americans for National Parks (ANP), the group was launched in September 2001 by the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA). The coalition was

formed when comprehensive research on the national park system confirmed what had been apparent to park goers for some time—the parks are in serious trouble from a chronic lack of funding.

Our research shows that America's national parks are underfunded by \$600 million a year," said Bodhi Garrett, ANP California Field Organizer. "As a result, there is massive backlogged damage."

The National Park Service, for example, added a sizeable tract of land to northern California's Redwood National Park after it was extensively logged. But because of the funding deficit the Park Service cannot afford to conduct research on restoration practices or control erosion on the land, Garrett said.

As a result nearby waterways are in danger from run-off. Also, potential habitat for the endangered Marbled murrelet has been severely compromised.

Redwood is one of many national parks in California home to large forested areas. The Giant Forest, which stretches through Sequoia and Kings Canyon national parks, is the largest accessible grove of Giant sequoias in the national park system and is straining under heavy visitation.

Parking lots constructed to make visiting the sequoias easy have created impacts on the trees' habitat that are now reaching

a critical point. The asphalt cover has increased the microclimate's temperature and reduced the amount of permeable forest floor, making it more difficult for the trees to survive and reproduce.

To combat the problem the park service has significantly reduced parking at the Giant Forest and has plans to institute a free shuttle service for visitors.

But such projects take money.

According to Garrett, the goal of ANP is two-fold. First, the coalition wants to see the annual budget of the parks increased by the NPCA's stated \$600 million figure. Second, it wants President George W. Bush to uphold his campaign pledge of spending \$4.9 billion to fix the damage to the parks' structures and ecosystems, accrued from years of neglect and abuse.

"Ultimately our goal is to build a national parks movement in this country," said Garrett.

The group plans to achieve this goal through a nationwide campaign of media relations, advertising, and grassroots education, as well as attendance at community events, letter writing campaigns to politicians and newspaper editors, activist trainings, and town hall meetings.

According to Marcia Lesky, ANP's National Campaign Field Manager, the strength of the coalition lies in the diversity of its membership.

The ANP includes a broad list of conservation and other non-profit organizations, from the Girl Scouts of America to the National Resources Defense Council. City councils, businesses, civic, cultural,

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*"The truth is that the parks need constant maintenance and care."*

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Sequoia National Park

photo courtesy of the National Park Service

trade and historic preservation organizations, and concerned individuals also fill its ranks.

"We want to create a venue for all these concerned voices to come together and speak with one voice," said Lesky. "Saving our national parks should be an easy sell; the trick is to let people know there is a problem."

The lack of funding means that important museum artifacts are not being preserved, ANP said. Archaeological sites are unprotected and unexcavated, historic structures are crumbling, vandalism is rampant, and educational opportunities, such as tours for school children, are unavailable in many places.

From an environmental perspective, insufficient funding means that lands that many assume are protected actually are in critical danger.

National parks are home to 60 percent of America's endangered wildlife, and yet

see "National parks," p. 16 col. 1

# Mark Fletcher: Life on the edge

## *From rock climbing to world travel to forest activism, Forests Forever's board president isn't afraid of a little risk*

Mark Fletcher's passion for protecting the environment has taken him across the globe, from the Ivory Coast to Saudi Arabia and to endless corners in between.

The Forests Forever board president's earliest brush with forest activism happened a bit closer to home—not in California's redwood forests as one might expect, but in the less likely state of Texas.

While pursuing a Ph.D. in chemical engineering from Texas A&M University in the late 1980s, Fletcher became appalled by the school's annual "Bonfire" football rally. A \$1 million-plus venture that involves making a stack of logs more than 50 feet high and setting it ablaze, the bonfire burns between 7000 and 8000 trees (mostly oaks) each year.

Fletcher and other student activists continually raised concerns about the safety of the event—fears which proved sadly well-founded when the structure collapsed in 1999, killing nine students.

But for Fletcher, the waste involved in cutting down thousands of trees just for tradition's sake also was hard to bear.

Other students have spoken out for years against the Bonfire, but have been unable to stop the event. In fact, the Bonfire will be reinstated this year after a three-year hiatus following the 1999 tragedy.

But that just proves a lesson Fletcher has learned from his subsequent years as an activist—nothing happens quickly.

"You have to look toward the long-term," he said. "I think it's also important that you stick by your ideals even if they're not politically feasible."

It is that attitude of patient doggedness that has allowed Fletcher to remain Forests Forever's board president through eight years of uphill battles. Although growing a nonprofit is inherently risky and difficult,

it seems a fitting task for a man who enjoys uphill climbs—literally.

An avid rock climber, Fletcher spends much of the little free time he has climbing in the Sierra Nevada and Yosemite.

"I see it as a way of just kind of escap-

year-old Fletcher was raised by two of the state's earliest environmental activists. His father, Jim, and mother, Alma, were members of the Sierra Club during the 1950s, long before the club was a household name. The two met through the organization, in fact.

Fletcher himself became immersed in California forest issues in the early 1990s after moving to Sonoma County when he graduated from Texas A&M. He began doing the kind of critical dirty work few are willing to do, sitting in on California Department of Forestry meetings and making comments on timber harvesting plans.

His work attracted the attention of the fledgling Forests Forever board, which asked him to become a member in 1994.

Four months later the board president resigned and Fletcher was asked to take the seat. He agreed and has held the position ever since.

He fits in his service to Forests Forever between his frequent journeys across the world. A water

chemist and part-owner of Turner Designs Hydrocarbon Instruments, based in Fresno, he monitors the levels of gas and oil that companies release into water.

While on the job, he said, he often witnesses horrible conditions created by oil companies in the regions he visits. In one area of Indonesia where he worked recently, two local villagers had been burned to death by oil catching fire.

While foreign areas may have laws to prevent environmental destruction, many countries lack the enforcement to make the regulations effective, Fletcher said. But despite the destruction he sees, he remains hopeful that conditions will improve.

"It's sad in certain areas," he said, "but



Mark Fletcher

ing from the rest of the world. It has a calming effect on me," Fletcher said.

He climbs for fun, but also to do an important public service of replacing the bolts used to anchor climbing equipment, which rust and become hazardous over time.

While climbers have been criticized in the past for damaging the rocks they scale, Fletcher said the techniques used now are far more benign than some used in the past.

"The trend now is to try to cause the least amount of damage," he said. "The climber's motto is to leave as little trace as possible."

Fletcher said his love of the outdoors can be traced to his upbringing in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Born near Woodside, 39-

see "Mark Fletcher," p. 15 col. 2

# Trees and temperature:

## As Earth's climate shifts, forests help combat warming trend

As pollution continues to rise into the world's skies and nations argue about how to combat global warming, trees from the Amazon to Humboldt County are quietly working to keep the planet's climate cool.

And while trees alone cannot stop global warming, experts say they can play a significant role in helping to slow climate change.

Trees absorb carbon dioxide, one of the major "greenhouse" gases responsible for

producing emissions faster than Nature can remove them, causing the Earth's average temperature to rise.

The bulk of carbon emissions come from cars and trucks, appliances and power plants. But deforestation is also a major source of carbon pollution.

Trees are natural absorbers of CO<sub>2</sub>. When forests are cut down and the remnants decay or are burned, the gas is released back into the atmosphere. Many

emissions in the world, second only to burning of fossil fuels. Scientists estimate that deforestation is responsible for 25 to 30 percent of carbon emissions worldwide.

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*"By burning those trees you're essentially returning carbon dioxide into the atmosphere just as you would if you were burning gasoline..."*

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*photo courtesy of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory*

global warming. Planting trees and intelligently managing existing forests, scientists say, helps offset carbon emissions.

"It isn't a permanent solution because eventually those trees die," said Susan Ustin, professor of resource science with the National Institute for Global Environmental Change in Davis. "(But) it buys the planet a few decades to convert to other energy forms."

### Deforestation major factor in warming

A certain level of greenhouse effect is natural, and in fact necessary for the existence of life on Earth. But human activity is

trees are turned into paper pulp or chips for fuel, both of which oxidize rapidly.

Moreover, says Elliott Norse, author of "Ancient Forests of the Pacific Northwest," wood that becomes structural timber or plywood lasts only about 50 years on average.

"By burning those trees you're essentially returning carbon dioxide into the atmosphere just as you would if you were burning gasoline in an automobile," said Benjamin Preston, senior research fellow with the Pew Center on Global Climate Change.

Further adding to the problem, deforestation means fewer and fewer trees are available to absorb carbon from the air. These two factors combined make deforestation one of the largest sources of CO<sub>2</sub>

In addition, says David Kelly in "Secrets of the Old-Growth Forest," Pacific Northwest forests sequester more than twice as much tonnage of carbon per acre than tropical forests such as the Amazon.

### Significant results from reforestation

A rare positive note in the bleak global warming scenario, reforestation in the U.S. already is helping to combat global warming's effects, scientists say.

In the U.S., forests are currently net carbon "sinks," absorbing more carbon than they emit.

"A lot of that (absorption) is due to reforestation in the East Coast and Canada," said Ustin. "A lot that was logged in the 1900s is being turned back into forest."

In addition to absorbing CO<sub>2</sub>, Ustin said, trees offer the added benefit of cooling their surroundings through shade and the process of absorbing water from the soil and releasing it as vapor into the atmosphere. This cooling, in turn, reduces the demand on electrical power supplies, often generated through burning of fossil fuels.

# Evidence of global warming

- *Rising temperatures.* Some parts of the world have warmed by as much as an average 4.5 degrees Fahrenheit in the last 100 years. The average temperature of the planet has risen about one degree Fahrenheit in that period.
- *Increased sea levels.* The world's sea level is estimated to have risen 4 to 10 inches over the past century, causing the destruction of beaches and wetlands around the world.
- *Melting glaciers.* Since 1995, more than 5400 square miles, an area equal to Connecticut and Rhode Island combined, have broken off of the Antarctic ice shelves and melted.
- *Significant habitat shifts for plants and animals.* Scientists have documented shifting populations and altered migration behavior as animals attempt to adapt to a changing climate. Many species that cannot adapt fast enough are in decline.
- *More-common and -severe winter floods and summer droughts.*
- *More-frequent and -severe storms.*

Source: The Sierra Club

"There have been studies that show there is a fairly large reduction in temperatures in areas that have a lot of street trees planted," she said.

According to the U.S.-based Union of Concerned Scientists, American forests if properly managed could absorb 40 to 80 million metric tons of carbon annually. That is equivalent to about three to five percent of current annual U.S. fossil fuel emissions.

The 1997 Kyoto Protocol, an international plan to address global warming, focuses in part on reforestation as a means to manage carbon emissions.

Under the protocol, many nations have agreed to reduce their emissions of greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by increasing fuel efficiency. In addition, the treaty allows for countries to attain their emissions-reduction targets by not cutting existing forests and by planting new trees. President George W. Bush, who did not acknowledge global warming as a problem until just this year, has refused to sign the treaty.

## "Emissions trading" debated

Despite the U.S. government's reluctance to pursue solutions to global warming, private organizations are experimenting with trees' potential for offsetting emissions. In 2000, The Pacific Forest Trust, a northern California conservation group, sold the air-cleansing capacity of trees on 5000 acres, including a partly old-growth redwood forest in San Mateo County, to Green Mountain, a Texas energy company.

Green Mountain's purchase of the forests' carbon absorption capacity was in expectation of future laws that might limit companies' carbon dioxide emissions. Of the 5000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted by Green Mountain per year, the newly acquired forests are estimated to offset half.

Yet emissions trading remains controversial. Environmental organizations such as Greenpeace say the protocol creates a perverse incentive in allowing countries to claim a carbon credit for planting trees

while not incurring a carbon debit for deforestation.

In addition, Greenpeace says, the

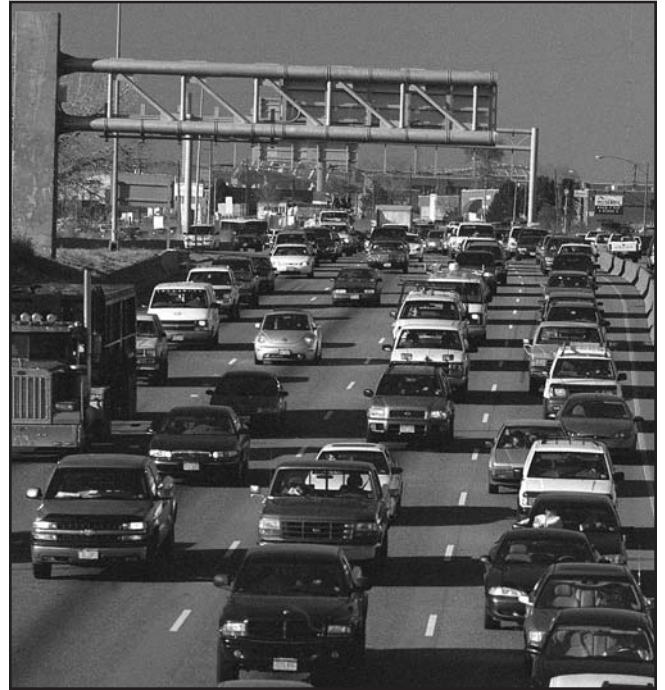


photo courtesy of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory

Protocol's provisions could speed the clearing of old-growth forests by encouraging their replacement with faster-growing species.

## Dire consequences possible for forests

While deforestation contributes to global warming, climate change in turn is projected to have major impacts on the forests that remain. In the short term some of these impacts could be positive, said Preston of the Pew Center.

Because carbon dioxide helps to fertilize plants, he said, scientists predict that forest productivity initially will increase as carbon levels rise. That could be good news for the timber industry, he said.

But any short term economic gains will be far outweighed by the negative consequences of forests having to adapt to rising temperatures, Preston said.

"In terms of the ecological implications and the aesthetic implications, you're not going to be too happy about what you see," he said.

see "Global warming," p. 12 col. 1

# Soquel State Forest: a cut above the rest

The unique mandate of Soquel Demonstration State Forest, which emphasizes environmental education and restoration over logging, could be used as a model for reforming Jackson Demonstration State Forest, activists say.

While Jackson has been damaged by intensive commercial timber harvests, the legislation governing Soquel allows only limited logging, which is intended to leave little trace on the land.

If the California Department of Forestry (CDF) had its way back in the mid-1990s, however, Soquel might be run much like Jackson.

Part of the reason Soquel is managed more wisely than Jackson is that Soquel was acquired recently, in Santa Cruz County, which has set the standard for conscientious timber harvesting in the state.

In contrast, CDF acquired Jackson in the 1940s for the stated purpose of demonstrating the profitability of logging second-growth redwoods. The agency's mandate also was to protect Jackson's environment.

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*"We feel we have the mandate to try new things to see if we can increase knowledge of the ecology and ... effective management techniques."*

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When CDF acquired Soquel—located about five miles east of Santa Cruz—in 1987, the legislation established to govern the forest allowed only limited timber harvests.

The bill was written largely by Assembly Speaker Pro-Tem Fred Keeley (D-Boulder Creek), who has been recognized by conservation groups for his commitment to preserving California's wild areas. At the time, Keeley was an aide to Assemblymember—now Congressman—Sam Farr (D-Carmel). The law allowed just

enough logging to cover the forest's operating expenses while providing income for research and education.

But in 1993 CDF proposed a management plan for the 3000-acre forest that called for increasingly heavy timber harvests over a 50-year period. The harvests would have provided CDF with net income, just as timber revenues from Jackson do today (see related story, page 1).

While only about \$200,000 is needed annually to operate Soquel forest, CDF's plan would have generated millions of dollars over the course of the plan's timeline, said Larry Prather, a member of the Santa Cruz group Citizens for Responsible Forest Management (CRFM).

"We determined they were going to remove so many board feet that it was far and above the levels that would be necessary to sustain that forest," Prather said.

The plan also proposed putting Soquel's timber revenues into the statewide Forest Resources Improvement Fund (FRIF). (See "State fund gives public money for private gain," Summer 2002 issue of "The Watershed.")

Virtually all of Jackson's revenues go to FRIF, and forest advocates believe it gives CDF a continuing incentive to log there. Members of CRFM feared that using the money for non-Soquel projects such as the ones FRIF finances would similarly increase cutting at Soquel and make spending of the funds difficult to track.

"Once (money) goes into FRIF, it's like putting it into a black hole," Prather said.

Contending CDF's management proposal violated the law that established the forest, CRFM threatened to sue the agency over the plan. The County of Santa Cruz backed the proposed lawsuit and CDF eventually gave in. Ultimately, the agency rewrote the management plan to reflect the



Horse logging in Soquel State Forest

photo courtesy of CDF

founding legislation.

Today Soquel is managed using practices intended to minimize the environmental impacts of logging. Foresters use horses to haul logs, for example, to reduce soil disturbance. Forest management also uses techniques such as lining roads with rock to minimize erosion.

Soquel Forest Manager Thomas Sutfin said those who oversee Soquel focus on finding innovative solutions for protecting the forest watershed.

"We feel we have the mandate to try new things to see if we can increase knowledge of the ecology and (discover) what are the most effective management techniques," Sutfin said.

Soquel's founding legislation also established an advisory committee giving the residents of the Santa Cruz area a formal body to go to if they feel logging is being done improperly.

Prather said the legislation that has protected Soquel from intensive logging could be used as a template for rewriting Jackson's mandate. Having visited Jackson numerous times, Prather said, he knows the damage that logging has done to the forest.

"It's just a shame what (CDF) is doing up there," he said.

— Matt Rogina and Andria Strickley



had reached either the House or Senate floors, however.

The Bush Administration argues that forests need to be thinned to reduce fuels accumulated due to years of excessive fire suppression by government agencies.

For decades, the Forest Service has attempted to put out all fires on federal lands, regardless of the fires' size or location.

Fire ecology experts agree that fire suppression has created a dangerous build-up of brush and small, closely spaced trees.

But in general, they say, prescribed burning and allowing natural fires to run their course whenever feasible is the best way to address the problem.

Some mechanical thinning also may be needed. On the other hand, building logging roads and removing large trees—which Bush's plan effectively emphasizes—would heighten fire risk, forest defenders say.

"Given an inch the timber industry has always taken a mile," Hughes said. "The profit motive compels timber companies to

In a September letter to Bush and Congress, top fire scientists said removing

and judicial review, according to the American Lands Alliance.



photo courtesy of the Bureau of Land Management

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***"There would be so much discretion... It's like handing over the forests to the White House and going back to medieval times when the king owned the forest."***

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remove just as many big healthy trees as they can. And regulations and monitoring by agencies such as the Forest Service have always been inadequate to catch more than a tiny fraction of the abuses."

According to a 1996 report by the Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project commissioned by Congress, timber harvesting has increased fire severity more than any other recent human activity.

smaller trees in Ponderosa pine forests might help prevent fires in some cases. But thinning other forest types, the scientists say, is unnecessary and would be harmful to forest health.

"Indeed," the scientists wrote, "many forests in the West do not require any treatment... These forests are still 'healthy' and thinning would only disturb them, not 'restore' them.

"In short, the variation among our forested landscapes is much too great for one treatment to be appropriate everywhere."

In addition to increasing fire risk, Bush's plan would nullify environmental protection for forests, environmentalists say.

The Bush Administration says the initiative will eliminate an environmental appeals process it calls "complex, time consuming, and burdensome."

But environmental groups say that what the plan actually will do is decimate the current environmental review process specified under the National Environmental Policy Act.

The McNinnis bill would weaken public involvement substantially by requiring unreasonable time limits on citizen appeals

The bill would prohibit a judge from issuing a temporary restraining order or a preliminary injunction against Forest Service projects, for example.

American Lands Alliance California Organizer Brian Vincent says the McNinnis bill essentially would apply to any federal lands at risk for fire. That means the White House could argue that national parks such as Yosemite should be logged to protect them from blazes, Vincent says.

"There would be so much discretion in terms of what the Forest Service can do," Vincent says of the House bill.

"It's like handing over the forests to the White House and going back to medieval times when the king owned the forest."

At press time, it was unclear when a House or Senate bill would be voted on.

Although the bill could stall in the Senate, Vincent says, "We still have to be vigilant."

—A.S.

ment in the area.

"Cumulative impacts assessment is about considering the full adverse effects of a project on soil, water and wildlife," Hughes said. "It places a project in its true perspective. It is one of the central pillars of CEQA."

The CEQA suit is the latest in a series of legal actions challenging CDF's timber extraction at Jackson. A March court settlement with the Jackson Campaign forced CDF to halt logging until a new management plan and EIR were completed (see related story, page 1).

Under CEQA an approved EIR is necessary for agencies such as CDF to implement a management plan. CDF certified the EIR for the Jackson plan Sept. 26.

In addition to the EIR's failure to consider cumulative impacts, the document is deficient in several other areas. Among the other oversights addressed in the lawsuit are:

- Failure to adequately consider

significant environmental effects. Forests Forever and the Jackson Campaign believe

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*"Despite the popular portrayal of environmental suits, legal actions are all too rare and agencies like CDF are far from fully accountable..."*

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CDF did not conduct a thorough investiga-

tion of the likely significant environmental impacts of the management plan as required by CEQA. The EIR failed to properly consider the effects of the project on aspects of the environment such as water quality and rare plants.

- Failure to properly respond to public comment. CDF did not properly evaluate and respond to public and other agency comment and criticism regarding environmental effects of the project.

Hughes said he is optimistic Forests Forever will win.

"The EIR's shortcomings are glaring," Hughes said. "Despite the popular portrayal of environmental suits, legal actions are all too rare and agencies like CDF are far from fully accountable."

-A.S.

## Q&A:

# The California Environmental Quality Act

### What is CEQA?

The California Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA, is one of conservationists' strongest tools in preventing projects from damaging the state's environmental resources. The law was adopted in 1970 to:

- inform the public of potential environmental impacts of a project.
- evaluate ways to mitigate adverse impacts.
- offer alternatives to the project.
- disclose the reasons a project was approved.

### What projects are subject to CEQA?

CEQA applies to projects undertaken by a public agency, funded by a public agency or which require a permit from a public agency. A "project" refers to an activity, under the jurisdiction of a public agency, that may create a physical change in the

environment. Most proposals for development in California are subject to the provisions of CEQA. Additionally, some actions taken by government agencies that do not immediately result in environmental disturbance (such as adoption of a general or community plan) are regulated by the law.

### What is a lead agency?

A lead agency is the public agency that has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project subject to CEQA. In general, a lead agency is a local governmental body with jurisdiction over land use. The lead agency is responsible for determining whether a project poses a sufficient likelihood of damage to the environment to necessitate preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or other environmental report. The lead agency is responsible for preparation of the environmental report.

### What is an EIR?

An EIR is a detailed report, written by the lead agency, describing and analyzing the significant environmental effects of a proposed project. The EIR must identify alternatives to the project and evaluate ways to reduce or avoid possible environmental damage.

### Who enforces CEQA?

Public agencies are entrusted to comply with CEQA. In other words, the lead agency is the only agency responsible for ensuring the project complies with CEQA guidelines. Ultimately, the public is responsible for enforcing CEQA through lawsuits or the threat of lawsuits if the lead agency does not comply with the law.

Sources: The California Environmental Resources Evaluation System ([http://ceres.ca.gov/topic/env\\_law/ceqa/more/faq.html](http://ceres.ca.gov/topic/env_law/ceqa/more/faq.html)) and the South Coast Air Quality Management District ([www.aqmd.gov/ceqa/](http://www.aqmd.gov/ceqa/)).

## U.N. Summit plan ends in disappointment

JOHANNESBURG— A plan reached at the U.N. World Summit on Sustainable Development in September will do little to help the environment or alleviate poverty, environmental groups say.

The 10-day summit in Johannesburg was intended to set the world's environmental agenda for the next decade, establish a model for future international agreements and ensure that poverty and environmental degradation are eradicated.

But environmentalists and delegates from poorer countries and criticized the summit's 70-page action plan for a lack of specific targets and timetables.

The EU had pushed for an increase in the percentage of global energy generated from renewable sources from the current 13 percent to 15 percent by 2015.

Delegates agreed, however, to drop targets and timetables for the boost in renewable energy because of strong U.S. opposition.

The plan does include a few specifics. One of these is to cut in half by 2015 the number of individuals worldwide who do not have access to sanitation.

Another is to create a series of protected marine areas planet-wide by 2012 and restrict fishing in many other parts of the world until stocks recover.

## Tree-sitter dies from fall near Santa Cruz

CORRALITOS, Calif. — An Earth First! activist died in October after falling during a tree-sit in rural Santa Clara County.

Robert Bryan, 25, of Salt Lake City was protesting against logging company Redwood Empire's operation in the Ramsey Gulch area about 20-miles south of San Jose.

According to Earth First! representatives, he had just come to the area to join the protest on Oct. 7 before falling from the tree the next morning.

Bryan was alone when he fell an estimated 120 feet from the tree, and it was unclear why he fell. He died en route to Valley Medical Center in San Jose.

Bryan apparently was the first California Earth First! tree-sitter to die after a fall from a tree. In June 2001 Earth First! tree sitter Jenna Griffith was injured after falling from a redwood tree in Boulder Creek. Activists say she has fully recovered.

Other Earth First! activists have died during protests. David Chain, 24, was killed by a felled tree in October 1998 in the Headwaters Forest area in Humboldt County.

Pacific Lumber Co. called the death accidental. Earth First! maintains that a logger deliberately felled the tree toward Chain.

In April Earth First! activist Beth O'Brien, 22, died in Oregon after falling 150 feet from a tree-sitting platform.

## Bush aims to weaken key environmental protection law

WASHINGTON— The Bush Administration is taking steps that conservationists say would gut a landmark environmental law governing development on public land.

In July the White House Council on Environmental Quality initiated a review of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Enacted in 1970, the law requires federal agencies to study and disclose the environmental effects of their actions and to include the public in the decision-making.

White House officials say they want to "modernize" the law because it causes bureaucratic gridlock.

But environmentalists say the move is an attempt to roll back NEPA because it conflicts with the Bush administration's anti-environment, pro-industry agenda.

In addition, the administration is proposing to exempt logging projects on federal lands from NEPA as part of his "Healthy Forests Initiative" (see story page 3).

In September a federal judge rejected a legal argument advanced by the Bush administration that NEPA does not apply in ocean waters more than three miles off U.S. shores. The judge's ruling stemmed from a lawsuit brought by a coalition of activist groups led by the National Resources Defense Council. The groups sued the U.S. Navy over the use of a powerful sonar system that environmentalists say can harm marine mammals.

## Klamath River diversion kills thousands of salmon

KLAMATH, Calif.— Thousands of salmon have died in Northern California's Klamath River— the result of water diversion for irrigation.

U.S. Interior Secretary Gale Norton ordered the diversion earlier this year to appease agricultural land owners experiencing a shortage of irrigation water.

Norton's decision came after a national panel of scientists said there was not any proof fish would be harmed as a result of the diversion. But by mid-September, tens of thousands of Chinook and at least 100 endangered Coho washed up dead on the river's shores.

Scientists said the fish died primarily from parasites and diseases that are usually held in check by low water temperatures. Salmon begin to experience stress when water temperatures rise above 68 degrees Fahrenheit. Because of low flows in the river, large numbers of fish were stranded in areas where the water temperature fluctuated between 70 and 80 degrees.

Several environmental groups have sued the federal Bureau of Reclamation in an attempt to force the agency to provide enough water for future salmon runs.

*"We  
all travel the milky  
way together, trees and  
men... trees are travelers, in  
the ordinary sense. They make  
journeys, not extensive ones, it is  
true; but our own little journeys,  
away and back again, are only  
little more than tree-wavings—  
many of them not so  
much."  
— John Muir*

Forests are expected to migrate over time as the climate warms, experiencing greater growth at the northern extremity of their range and dying off in the south. It is uncertain which species will be able to adapt to temperature shifts and which will not. It is possible, Preston said, that some species simply could stop reproducing entirely.

Widespread tree mortality due to climate shift and drought also sets the stage for still-further tree death due to opportunistic pests, such as spruce budworm, as well as increased forest fires.

Global warming could have a variety of consequences for California forests, according to "Global Climate Change and California: Potential Impacts and Responses" (ed. Joseph B. Knox, University of California Press, 1991). Some of these consequences include:

- Death of Douglas firs in low lands due to loss of winter chill conditions needed for seed germination and tree growth.
- Increased fuel for fires from Douglas fir die-off.
- Deterioration of stream water quality due to increased rates of decomposition, weathering and erosion from the death of trees that formerly held the soil.

Scientists say individual redwoods in California may survive for centuries past the point when climate changes make growth of new seedlings impossible, potentially providing time for restoration efforts.

## California helping to lead reforms

It is easy to believe from reading media reports that global warming is just a theory, something most scientists still debate. A recent Wall Street Journal editorial even asked the question: "Why require the nations of this planet to spend the hundreds of billions of dollars necessary to reduce carbon dioxide and other emissions when we don't even know if the earth's climate is getting permanently hotter...?"

In reality, there is overwhelming scientific agreement that the planet's temperature is rising, and that it will continue to do so for decades to come.

"I think it's pretty clear that the scientific community has arrived at this consen-

see "Global warming," p. 15 col. 2



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more. Environmentalists are concerned about the logging outlined in the plan, which targets the forest's oldest second-growth redwoods, many of which are over a century old. The document calls for extensive clear-cutting, which pollutes rivers and streams and destroys wildlife habitat.

Yet forest advocates were pleasantly surprised by the stipulations the forestry board placed on its approval of the plan. These included:

- Delaying two large logging plans until CDF reports back to the board on how these plans would affect any restoration of parts of the forest to old-growth-like conditions.
- Directing CDF to develop within one year a detailed research and demonstration plan for Jackson, including the potential effects of logging on all forest values, not just timber volumes.
- Ordering CDF to report back within a year on steps it has taken to establish a meaningful dialogue with local residents regarding the management of Jackson.

In requiring the stipulations, the forestry board cited the overwhelming public opposition to CDF's plan.

The plan and accompanying Environmental Impact Report (EIR) drew almost 5000 responses, the bulk of which Forests Forever and the Jackson Campaign helped generate. Of the comments CDF received, fewer than 50 supported the plan.

Board of Forestry member

Kirk Marckwald said CDF "places (the board) in an impossible position when it brings a plan to the board that is overwhelmingly opposed by

continues to degrade it. Located between the towns of Mendocino and Ft. Bragg, the 50,000-acre forest is home to some of the state's highest qual-

timber can generate profit. Jackson has been steadily degraded over the years by CDF logging. Still, the forest is in far better shape than most adjacent lands, long since cut over by industry.

Until a lawsuit temporarily stopped the chainsaws in 2001, timber harvesting in Jackson had been generating \$15 million annually for CDF programs.

In 2000 the Jackson Campaign sued CDF on the basis it was operating at Jackson under an outdated management plan. The Board of Forestry's rules require logging in state forests to be conducted under a "current management plan." At the time the lawsuit was filed, the management plan for Jackson had not been updated since 1983.

In May 2001 the Mendocino Superior Court issued a Preliminary Injunction halting logging in Jackson until a new management plan and accompanying EIR were completed. CDF released the EIR and management plan for public review in May of this year.

In addition to comments from individuals CDF received numerous letters from public agencies and scientists criticizing the plan. In one of the letters, fisheries biologist Patrick Higgins called the Jackson plan and EIR "fundamentally flawed" where it addresses the status of endangered Coho salmon and Steelhead trout in Jackson's streams.

Higgins criticized the EIR's claim that because Coho populations in Jackson were able to survive past logging operations, they will survive future cutting as well.

"This cavalier attitude toward maintaining Coho salmon in the forest sums up



Jackson Forest  
photo courtesy of the Campaign to Restore Jackson State Redwood Forest

the public."

Vince Taylor, executive director of the Campaign to Restore Jackson State Redwood Forest, said the board's actions could delay most logging in

Jackson for up to a year and significantly limit the number of trees CDF can harvest.

"This is going to create serious problems for them," Taylor said of CDF. "They are going to have a hard time finding enough things to log."

Forests Forever has been working for more than a year to generate awareness about Jackson and the logging that

ity redwood habitat outside of parks and preserves.

With at least 10,000 acres of trees between 80 and 100 years old, the forest provides some important habitat for species

that depend on large, older redwoods to survive.

The state originally acquired Jackson in the 1940s to demonstrate that second-growth logging could be profitable. At the time, virtually no mar-

ket for second-growth timber existed and there was strong doubt that such a market would emerge.

It has long since been proven that second-growth

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***"They (CDF) are going to have a hard time finding enough things to log."***

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see "Jackson," p. 16 col. 4

To support the outreach campaign, the foundation has retained Stephen Hopcraft, President of Stephen K. Hopcraft Communications Consulting in Sacramento.

Hopcraft boasts several years of experience in media relations work for such clients as the California Federation of Teachers and the United Steel Workers of America. He has worked on numerous political and grassroots campaigns, such as the Partners for Clean Air campaign. In 1996 he helped pass statewide California propositions to establish a living wage and legalize medical marijuana and beat back an initiative to end rent control for mobile homes.

Created in 1998, the Forests Forever Foundation is a spin-off of the main Forests Forever organization. The foundation was established with the chief purpose of educating Californians about forest issues in the state.

Because Forests Forever's primary purpose is lobbying, donations to the organization are not tax-deductible. The foundation,

on the other hand, provides supporters with a tax-deductible option for contributing to Forests Forever's non-lobbying work.

The pairing of lobbying and educational entities is a

common and effective arrangement for environmental groups. The Sierra Club and the Sierra Club Foundation and the Planning and Conservation League (PCL) and PCL Foundation are two examples.

Hughes said the Goldman Fund grant will achieve a critical first step in saving Jackson—making the public aware that it exists.

"A lot of people don't even know what Jackson is or where it is, let alone what's happening to it," Hughes said.

—A.S.

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***"A lot of people don't even know what Jackson is..."***

---

old-growth grove in the greater 60,000-acre Headwaters Forest owned by MAXXAM Corp. The remaining 52,000-plus acres are either temporarily protected or have no protection at all; MAXXAM's subsidiary Pacific Lumber Co. is still logging the land today.

Forests Forever first formed around efforts to save Headwaters. In 1990 the "Forests Forever Initiative" was placed on the ballot. The initiative would have prohibited clear-cutting in California and authorized a \$742 million bond issue for the state to purchase old-growth forests.

The initiative came within two percentage points of winning, despite being massively outspent by timber interests. Forests Forever continued to devote most of its first 10 years of existence to generating public awareness and support for saving Headwaters.

BLM is expected to release a final version of the preserve management plan sometime in January. At that point the public will have another 30 days to comment on the plan before it is finally

approved.

The fact that most of Headwaters Forest remains vulnerable to logging means that it is essential to maintain the majority of the preserve as wilderness, environmentalists

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***"The highest and best use of this land is as wildlife habitat."***

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say. Forests Forever and other groups want about 6000 acres of the preserve designated as wilderness. This status prohibits motorized recreation, as well as extractive uses such as logging.

"We believe that the highest and best use of this land is as wildlife habitat, given that it's really the last refuge for a number of species," Pickett said.

—A.S.

Garbelotto in a statement released by the University of California.

In 2000, scientists determined that Sudden Oak Death was caused by a new species of the fungus-like *Phytophthora* called *Phytophthora ramorum*.

The pathogen, a relative of the organism that caused the Irish potato famine of the mid-1800s, was found on rhododendrons in Germany and the Netherlands as early as 1993.

It is unclear whether the disease originated in one of those countries.

Since its discovery in Marin County, the Sudden Oak Death pathogen has been found in more than 10 other California counties and in Curry County, Oregon.

With the addition of Coast redwood and Douglas fir, there are now 17 known species worldwide susceptible to the pathogen. Sixteen of these are found in California, including madrone, Bay laurel and buckeye.

"We see a whole range of symptoms... from nasty cankers on the trunks of oaks to minor spots on the leaves of the buckeye," said UC Davis researcher David Rizzo.

In the study that preceded the September announcement, researchers found the pathogen in redwoods in all the places they checked, while infected Douglas fir saplings were found at only one site.

The Douglas fir samples seemed to show a stronger reaction to infection, however.

In 2000, California established the Sudden Oak Death Task Force to help halt the disease's spread.

Following the September announcement that redwoods and Douglas firs are hosts for the pathogen, Gov. Gray Davis asked President George W. Bush for \$10 million in federal aid to battle the disease.

U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer has filed for another \$5 million in emergency federal funding.

Researchers emphasize the need for further study before they can predict how much damage the disease will cause.

"It may take years before we can start answering questions about the ecological impacts of the disease on Coast redwood and Douglas fir," said Rizzo.

—A.S.

## The Watershed

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### The Watershed

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*"Restore,  
Reinhabit,  
Re-enchant"*

*"Mark Fletcher"*  
continued from p. 5

anywhere I go there are people working on preventing pollution."

What bothers him more than what happens in other countries, Fletcher said, are the loopholes in the U.S.' own environmental laws. Even when companies follow regulations, the rules are often so weak that excessive pollution occurs anyway, he said.

The Coast Guard, as an example, requires that boats carry monitors to gauge how much oil they release into the water. But the law does not require that the monitors actually work, Fletcher said.

He remains unfazed by the incompetence he sees, choosing instead to focus on the possibilities for change. When it comes to protecting

California's forests, he said, education is key.

"I would like to see more education for young children on up about the forests," he said, "(about) how the forest benefits people and why it's necessary, not just for humans but for all the animals."

— A.S.

*"Global warming"*  
continued from p. 12

— that climate change is occurring and that it is predominantly (human-caused)," said Preston.

The only uncertainty about global warming, the majority of scientists say, is how much damage it will cause the planet.

Although the U.S.' reluctance to take action against global warming is viewed as both arrogant and potentially disastrous by many other nations, California is taking steps on its own to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In July, Gov. Gray Davis signed legislation targeting vehicle emissions in the state.

Under the new law, the California Air Resources Board must adopt standards achieving the maximum feasible reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from cars and light trucks, beginning with 2009 models.

"The auto manufacturers will get to decide how they're going to meet (the standards)," said Elisa Lynch of the Bluewater Network, a San Francisco environmental organization that was a primary backer of the legislation.

Lynch said the Bluewater Network's hope is that the auto makers will find it more cost-effective to build all their

cars to meet the law's emission standards than to build separate models for California.

The faster that states and nations act to slow global warming, the better chance we have of escaping its unforeseen consequences, said Ustin of the National Institute for Global Environmental Change.

"If we decided that it was to our society's best interest to plan ahead and assume that the worst is going to happen," she said, "maybe we would buy ourselves 20 or 30 years."

— A.S.

## FORESTS FOREVER FOUNDATION

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# Action Rolodex

## JACKSON FOREST

Write to your state assemblymember and senator, urging him or her to support legislation— or, better still, introduce legislation— to change the mission of Jackson Forest from logging to restoration. Jackson can and should be used to “demonstrate” and refine the best methods for bringing back ancient-forest characteristics to the cutover ecosystem.

Your assemblymember or senator  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249

Or look up your state legislators at [www.leginfo.ca.gov](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov).

*“Jackson”  
continued from p. 13*

the benign neglect attitude of (CDF) toward Coho recovery,” Higgins said in his letter. “Today, (Jackson Coho) represent the most significant gene resources within hundreds of miles, which, if lost, would confound Coho recovery.”

On the basis of the EIR’s inadequacy, the Forests Forever Foundation and the Jackson Campaign filed a lawsuit against CDF Oct. 24. (See story on page 1).

In addition, both groups are working on legislation that would change Jackson’s legislative mandate from demonstration of logging to demonstrating restoration.

Taylor of the Jackson Campaign said that despite the forestry board’s tougher requirements for Jackson, changing the forest’s mandate is the only way to permanently end CDF’s large-scale logging.

“The existing mandate says that Jackson will be managed for maximum sustainable production of forest products,” Taylor said. “That language gives permission to CDF to treat it as a commercial logging source.”

— A.S.

— Erica Steiner

*“National parks”  
continued from p. 4*

such species’ numbers are dwindling.

A news report released by three conservation groups in September and posted on ANP’s website shows that the air in some national parks is more polluted than that of many urban areas.

And invasive plant species are taking over many ecosystems, threatening native species and posing other hazards. Joshua Tree National Park in southern California, for example, currently faces a severe threat of wildfire due to exotic grasses.

“Many people think that because parks are naturally occurring, preserving them is as easy as putting a boundary around them,” said Lesky. “The truth is that the parks need constant maintenance and care.”

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