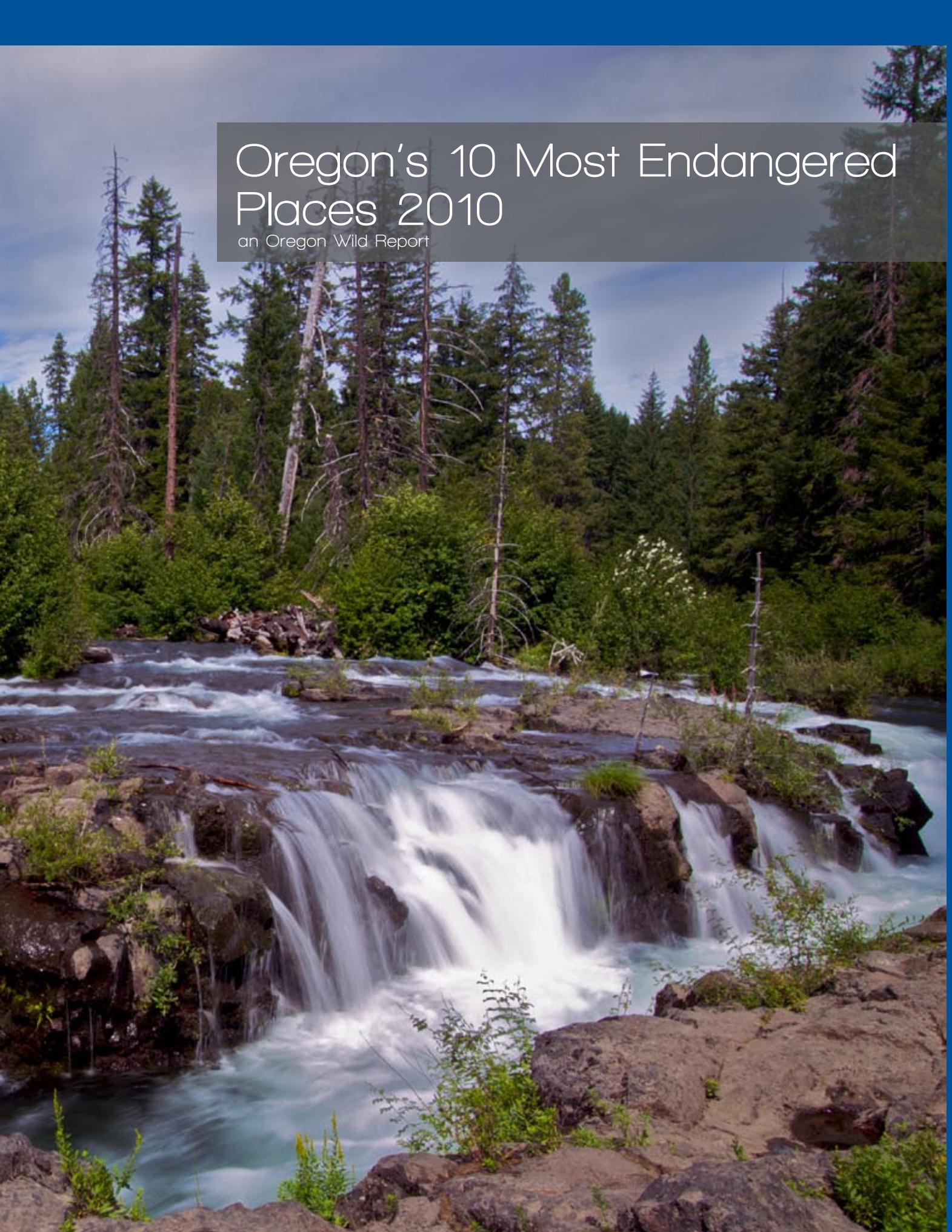


Oregon's 10 Most Endangered Places 2010

an Oregon Wild Report





OREGON WILD

10 Most Endangered Places

Our mission:

Since 1974, Oregon Wild has worked to protect and restore Oregon's wildlands, wildlife, and waters as an enduring legacy for future generations.

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*Fold out the cover for a spectacular Wild Rogue poster

COVER: DAVID GUTSCHMIDT

ABOVE: FRANCIS EATHERINGTON



Protecting Special Places in a Time of Partisanship and Economic Peril

Mining.

Logging.

Industrial energy development.

These are just a few of the threats facing the landscapes featured in the second annual *Oregon's 10 Most Endangered Places* report. And frankly, the preceding list of activities that degrade our public lands isn't surprising. Oregonians who care about clean water, carbon-storing forests, and unique wildlife have been fighting proposals like these from extractive industries for decades.

Indeed, the #1 Endangered Place for 2010 (see pg. 5) is, to various degrees, threatened by all three. But what is the chief threat to Oregon's most endangered place?

Political indifference.

That's right. In a time when bailouts and death panels are the main points of debate in Congress and the national consciousness is (justifiably) consumed by thoughts of economic recession, public lands preservation gets short shrift. While eight years of Bush administration rule put conservationists squarely on the defensive, our current tendency to lurch from one national crisis to the next (first financial collapse then health care) has relegated the defense of our natural heritage to an afterthought.

This report should serve as a wake-up call. Solving the health care crisis is important but it requires the protection of the natural world that gives us clean water, clean air, and provides the foundation for our well-being. We

must recapture economic vitality and create jobs for the future, but it cannot happen if we continue to undermine natural processes that represent the true underpinnings of our wealth.

The process of researching, writing, and editing our second annual *10 Most Endangered Places* report put in sharp focus the perilous path we are on, but it also allowed us to look back on past threats and how we responded.

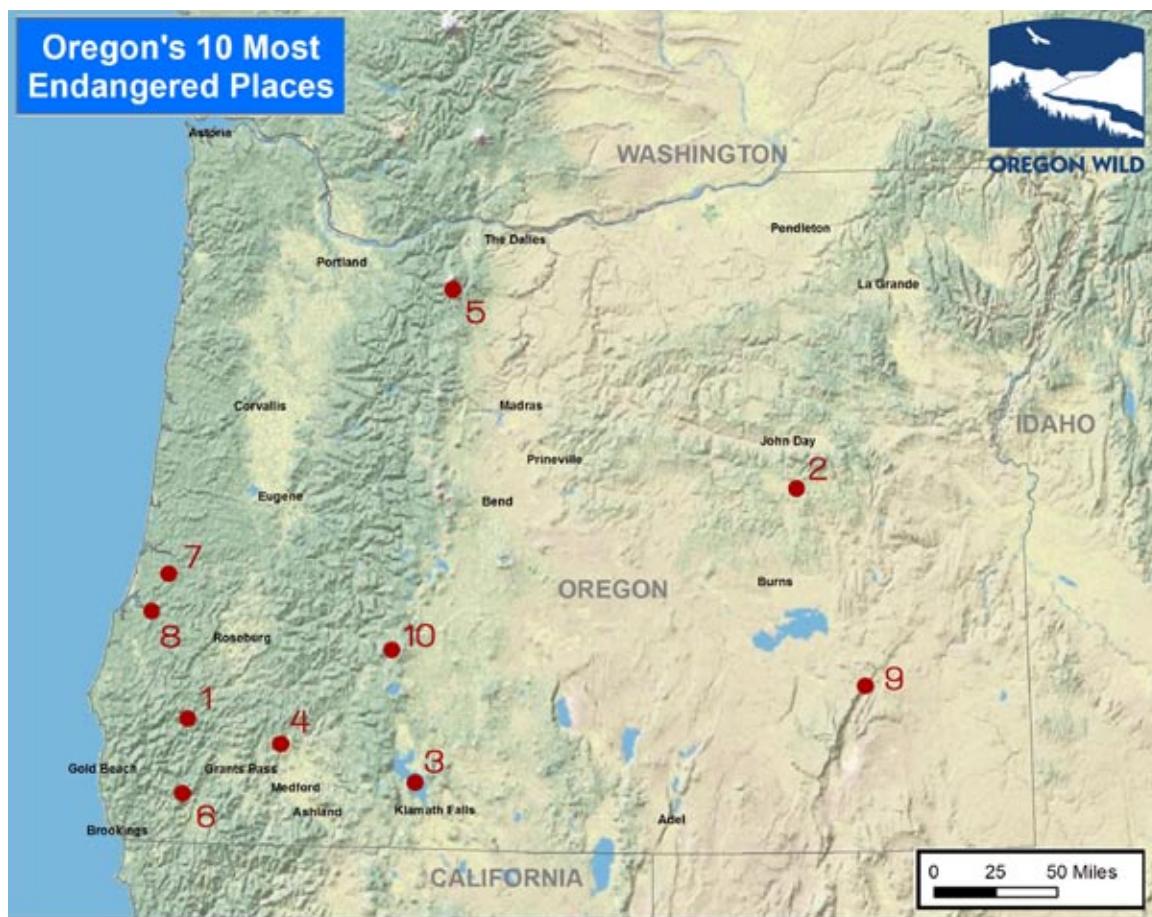
Last year, the Palomar pipeline threatened to tear a 40-mile long clear-cut through the heart of Mount Hood National Forest. The proposal landed the Clackamas River Watershed in the #4 spot in the 2009 Most Endangered Places report. The pipeline was meant to connect with a proposed Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminal near Astoria. After an upheaval of opposition from conservationists, landowners, local government officials, and others, the company proposing the LNG terminal went bankrupt and abandoned their plans. The scuttled LNG terminal put the future of the Palomar pipeline in doubt and moved the Clackamas watershed off this year's list.

Still, four places featured in last year's report remain on the list this year. Long time American conservationist Brock Evans famously said that the only way to win conservation campaigns was through "endless pressure, endlessly applied." For the ten places featured in this report, the time for pressure is now.

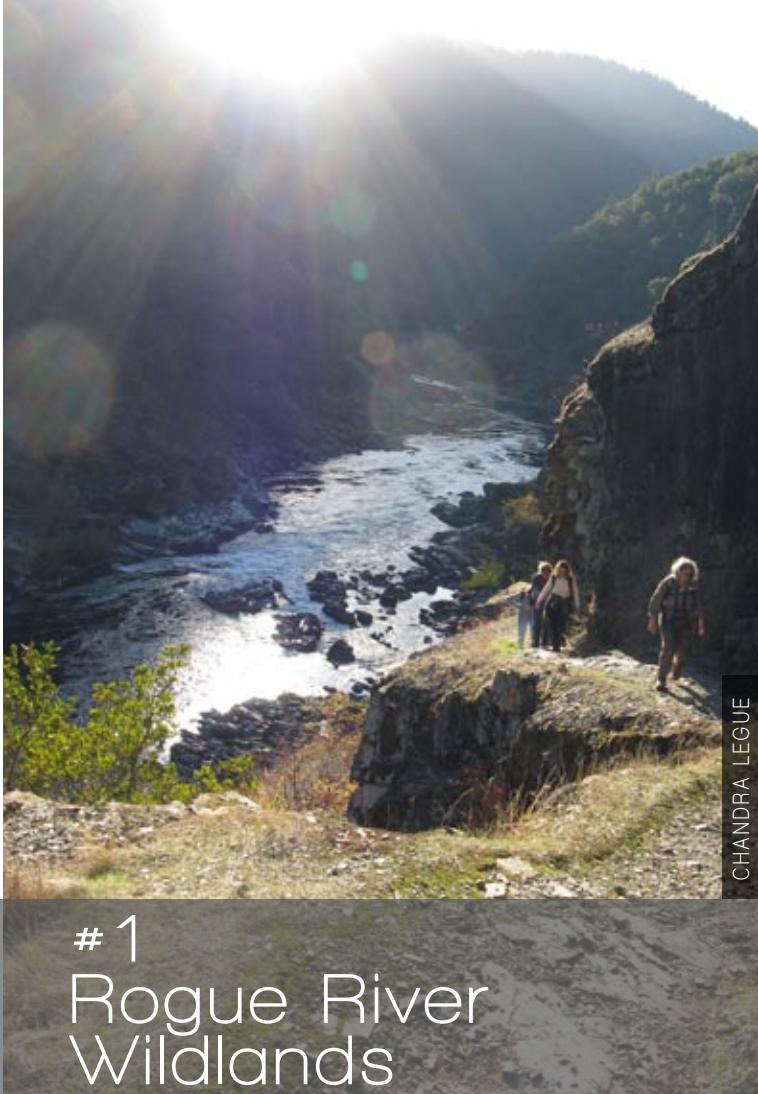
-Sean Stevens



Oregon's 10 Most Endangered Places



- 1 Rogue River Wildlands** page 5
Submitted by: Oregon Wild - Author: Chandra LeGue
- 2 Blue Mountains** page 6
Submitted by: HCPC - Author: David Mildrexler
- 3 Upper Klamath Lake** page 7
Submitted by: Oregon Wild - Author: Sean Stevens
- 4 Southwest Oregon Ancient Forests:
Evans Creek - a Watershed on the Brink** page 8
Submitted by: KS Wild - Author: Chandra LeGue
- 5 The Glaciers of Mount Hood** page 9
Submitted by: Oregon Wild - Author: Sean Stevens
- 6 Illinois River (Siskiyou Wild Rivers)** page 10
Submitted by: Siskiyou Project - Author: Sean Stevens
- 7 Elliott State Forest** page 11
Submitted by: Cascadia Wildlands - Author: Francis Eatherington
- 8 Coos Bay Estuary and SW Oregon Watersheds** page 12
Submitted by: Rogue Riverkeeper - Author: Lesley Adams
- 9 Steens Mountain** page 13
Submitted by: ONDA - Author: Liz Nysson
- 10 Mt. Bailey Roadless Area** page 14
Submitted by: Oregon Wild - Author: Rob Klavins



CHANDRA LEUE

1 Rogue River Wildlands

Threat: Political indifference, logging sales, climate change

The Place: The Wild Rogue River is one of Oregon's wildest, most scenic, and most enjoyed landscapes. The headwaters of the river flow off the slopes of historic Mount Mazama (now Crater Lake). The Rogue flows through miles of wildlands before encountering mostly demolished dams and flowing through Grants Pass. The lower river then cuts its way through the Siskiyou Mountains on the way to the ocean. It is one of the state's premier recreational areas, attracting tens of thousands of visitors every year. Outdoor recreation, like rafting, fishing and hiking, contributes millions of dollars to the local economy each year. In addition, the Wild Rogue and its tributaries provide important salmon and steelhead habitat, providing the backbone for one of Oregon's most important sport and commercial fisheries.

The Wild Rogue is far more than just the river and tributary streams. Tens of thousands of acres of wild forest lands surround these free flowing waters. The ancient forests of the Rogue are home to a huge diversity of unique plants and provide essential habitat for wildlife like elk, bald eagles, black bear, river otters, and threatened northern spotted owls and marbled murrelets.

The Threat: Despite the importance of the wildlands and streams surrounding the Rogue, threats from logging, road-building, and other development are ongoing – from the headwaters to the river's lower reaches.

In the headwaters of the Rogue, right on the edge of Crater Lake National Park, the planned Bybee Timber Sale would fragment the vast wildlands connecting Oregon's only National Park to surrounding roadless and Wilderness areas and degrade beautiful native forests.

In the lower Rogue, where the surrounding forests are managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), a massive old-growth logging scheme called the Western Oregon Plan Revision (WOPR) posed a huge threat to the watershed. While the WOPR has been dropped, old logging sales – and potential new ones – can still move forward along an unprotected stretch of the river. Tenuous court rulings are all that stand in the way of new roads and damaging logging in hundreds of acres of pristine wildlands.

The Solution: The Wild Rogue Wilderness proposal would protect 58,000 acres of forests managed by the BLM surrounding a stretch of the lower Rogue. In addition to Wilderness protections, 93 miles of new Wild & Scenic Rivers would be designated. Dozens of local businesses, anglers, and rafters support the legislation and in May 2010 a logging industry lobby group agreed to drop their opposition to the proposal. This Wilderness agreement would permanently prevent destructive logging, mining, and other development that has threatened the area for years.

The headwaters of the Rogue River are included in the 450,000 acre Crater Lake Wilderness proposal. This vast expanse of wildlands should also be protected to ensure the integrity of Oregon's only National Park and to establish an 80-mile long wildlife corridor along the crest of the Cascades.

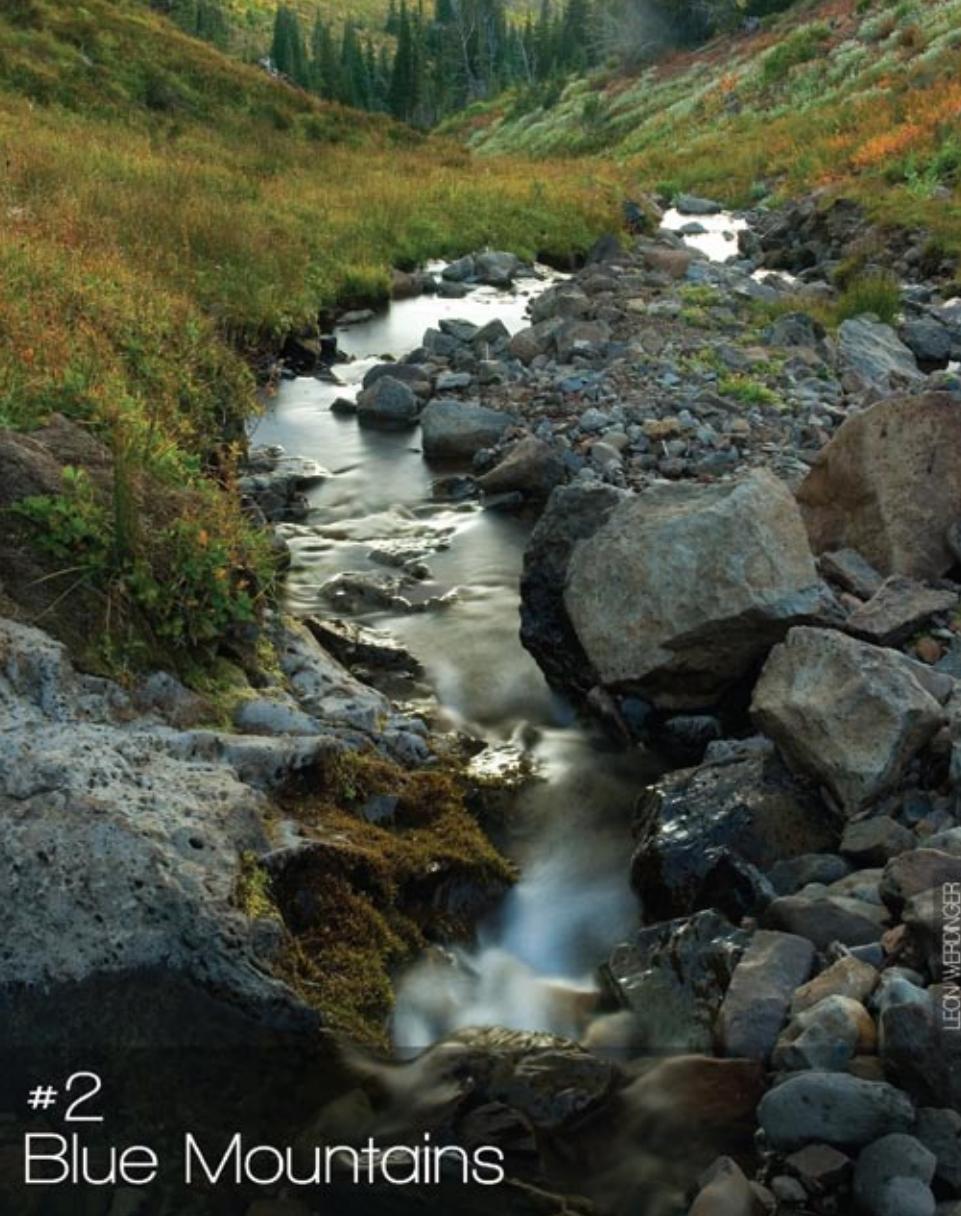
Fast Fact

The Rogue River is the largest producer of Pacific salmon in Oregon outside of the Columbia River.



Time is running out to protect the Wild Rogue in 2010. Congressman DeFazio and Senator Wyden should pass new legislation this year to permanently protect the wildlands surrounding this iconic river.





Blue Mountains are full of superlatives. The area is home to one of the largest elk herds in the nation, includes the largest Wilderness in Oregon, and houses the deepest canyon in North America. Pure water in high-mountain lakes source a rich legacy of major rivers with critically important fisheries including the John Day, Wallowa, Minam, Imnaha, and Wenaha Rivers. Large, ecologically important tracts of roadless lands remain unprotected throughout the Blue Mountains.

The Threat: The U.S. Forest Service is currently drafting a new plan for the management of the Malheur, Umatilla, and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests that make up the Blue Mountains. The proposed plan is astonishingly weak in its recommendations for protecting Wilderness and Wild & Scenic Rivers. While conservationists have identified 1.8 million acres of Wilderness-quality lands, and an official Forest Service survey counted 953,000 acres of potential Wilderness, the agency is recommending a paltry 16,350 acres for Wilderness protection. If that weren't bad enough, on the one million acre Malheur National Forest, the Forest Service could not find a single river they believe deserving of a Wild & Scenic designation.

The Solution: The Blue Mountains form a critical linkage between the Northern Rockies – the most wild and intact ecosystem in the lower 48 – and the Cascades Mountains Ecosystems. As climate change increases the need for wildlife to disperse and find new habitats, protecting both large core habitat areas and landscape linkages throughout the Blue Mountains and into the adjacent Cascades and Northern Rockies ecosystems is one of the most critical adaptation measures we can take for ensuring the survival of wildlife and wildlands.

The best way to protect these vital habitat corridors is to designate more Wilderness and Wild & Scenic Rivers in the Blue Mountains. The final draft of the Blue Mountains Forest Plan should greatly increase the number of acres recommended for Wilderness protection and identify more rivers to designate as Wild & Scenic Rivers.

Fast Fact:

The Wallowa-Whitman National Forest inside the Blue Mountains is a study in extremes. The wettest spot on the forest along the Minam River receives 110 inches of rain a year while the driest, in Hells Canyon, gets only 10 inches.

#2 Blue Mountains

Threat: Inadequate forest plan

The Place: The Blue Mountains are comprised of a large number of distinct mountain ranges that extend from the eastern slope of the Cascades to the Northern Rockies. The Ochoco Mountains form the western end of the Blue Mountains range, and the rugged Wallows (considered a distinct subset of the Blues) rise to the east. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Blue Mountains ecoregion also extends into southwestern Washington with the Wenaha-Tucannon Wilderness, and into Idaho where the Hells Canyon Wilderness and the Seven Devils Mountains and Wilderness Area straddle the Oregon/Idaho border.

Numerous mountain ranges in between these areas such as the Strawberry Mountains and the Elkhorn Mountains harbor some of Oregon's most rugged, wild, and beautiful country. The Blues are geologically and topographically very complex contributing to the remarkable diversity and quality of wildlife habitat that supports numerous species throughout the range. The



BRETT COLE

Due to excessive irrigation diversions in 2002, the lake dropped below 4,139 feet for over two straight months. (In that same year, up to 70,000 adult salmon died in the Klamath River due to low water). The wetlands will likely go dry again in 2010 thanks to limited rainwater and snowmelt combined with Bureau of Reclamation mismanagement. After untamed irrigation withdrawals in 2009 left the lake dangerously short of water, the 2010 federal irrigation plan allows the lake level to fall an astonishing 2.5 feet below its natural low.

#3 Upper Klamath Lake

Threat: Human-caused drought

The Place: While its neighbor to the north (Crater Lake) grabs top-billing on a list of Oregon's lakes, Upper Klamath Lake is actually the state's largest freshwater lake and serves as a major biodiversity hotspot. Twenty miles long and eight miles wide, the lake sits at the headwaters of the once mighty Klamath River. Drawing water from the Williamson, Wood, Sprague, and other rivers, the lake level was historically modulated by a natural reef on its southern tip.

Upper Klamath Lake is home to two species of endangered fish, the native Qapdo (Lost River sucker) and C'wam (short-nosed sucker), as well as rainbow trout. The marshes and wetlands along its shores – including Upper Klamath National Wildlife Refuge – provide excellent nesting and rearing habitat for waterfowl, bitterns, herons, and countless other birds. The refuge's American White Pelican breeding colony is among the few remaining in the West. Hardstem bulrush and wocus lilies dominate the vegetation along the lake.

One hundred and fifty years ago Upper Klamath Lake was surrounded by a vast expanse of nearly 350,000 acres of wetlands, shallow lakes, and marshes.

The Threat: Since the inception of the Klamath Irrigation Project in 1905, Upper Klamath Lake has suffered from chronic water shortages and poor water quality. In the early 20th century the Bureau of Reclamation blasted a hole in the natural reef that had previously kept lake levels between 4,140 and 4,143 feet. When water levels drop below 4,139 feet, all 14,000 acres of Upper Klamath National Wildlife Refuge are left completely dry.

Water diversions and pollution from flood irrigation of lands above Upper Klamath Lake also contribute to the problems facing the refuges and wildlife in the lake. While limited eutrophication (an increase in nutrients that often results in algae production) of Upper Klamath Lake was historically natural, agricultural pesticide runoff and animal waste have long overloaded the lake with phosphorous that at times sparks severe algal blooms that can kill native fish.

The Solution: In the Klamath Basin, solutions start with water. Specifically, demand for the area's scarce water resources must be brought back into line with what nature can provide. For too long, irrigation demand has come first and struggling fish and wildlife populations have been a distant second. Today, as global climate change threatens to exacerbate water shortages, particularly in high desert basins like the Klamath, we need a new approach.

Federal and state governments should reduce the demand for irrigation water through a willing-seller buyout program. Furthermore, the Bureau of Reclamation should be required to fulfill the needs of threatened and endangered species affected by the operation of the Klamath Irrigation Project.

Fast Fact:

The unusual mating dance of the Western Grebe, a water bird common to Upper Klamath Lake, was recently captured by a BBC/Discovery Channel crew filming a segment for the mini-series "Life."



#4

Southwest Oregon Ancient Forests

Evans Creek - a watershed on the brink

Threat: Logging, fish and wildlife habitat fragmentation

The Place: A visit to the Evans Creek watershed, northeast of Grants Pass and a tributary to the Rogue River, can be a depressing experience. Part of the “checkerboard” that makes up much of southwest Oregon, every other square mile is owned by industrial timber companies who have clear-cut all of the native forests and replaced them with tree farms. The alternating blocks are publicly-owned forests, managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), but haven’t fared much better.

Much of the public land in the Evans Creek watershed has been severely degraded as well. Less than 13% of Lower Evans Creek still retains old-growth forests, and a maze of logging roads fragment the landscape and routinely dump sediment into streams. Despite this, remnants of the healthy watershed still remain. Fall Chinook salmon still spawn here, migratory birds still utilize the few intact forest stands, and rare plant species are found in the remaining old-growth forests. Even a few northern spotted owls are (barely) hanging-on in what remains of their habitat.

Unfortunately, Evans Creek is not the only watershed that fits this profile in southwest Oregon. Hundreds of thousands of acres of public lands in the Coos Bay, Roseburg, and Medford Districts of the BLM have been fragmented by miles of logging roads and clear-cuts.

The Threat: While the BLM’s Western Oregon Plan Revisions (WOPR) would have dramatically increased logging of some of our last old-growth forests, the withdrawal of this flawed plan last year does not mean old-growth logging is off the table. Southwest Oregon BLM Districts are notorious for planning old-growth logging. Many of these misguided projects are currently held up due to requirements to protect threat-

ened fish and wildlife – as they should be. But thousands of acres of mature and old-growth logging are still pending or in the planning stages in important tributaries of the Rogue, Umpqua, Coquille, and Applegate Rivers.

The recently proposed Evans Creek Timber Sale on the Medford District BLM plans logging another 4,000 acres in the Evans Creek watershed,

including in riparian areas and important wildlife habitat. More than half of this logging would involve “regeneration harvests” – the BLM euphemism for clear-cutting – in some of the last mature and old-growth forests in the watershed. Already threatened with severe habitat loss, salmon and spotted owls will be further harmed by this proposal.

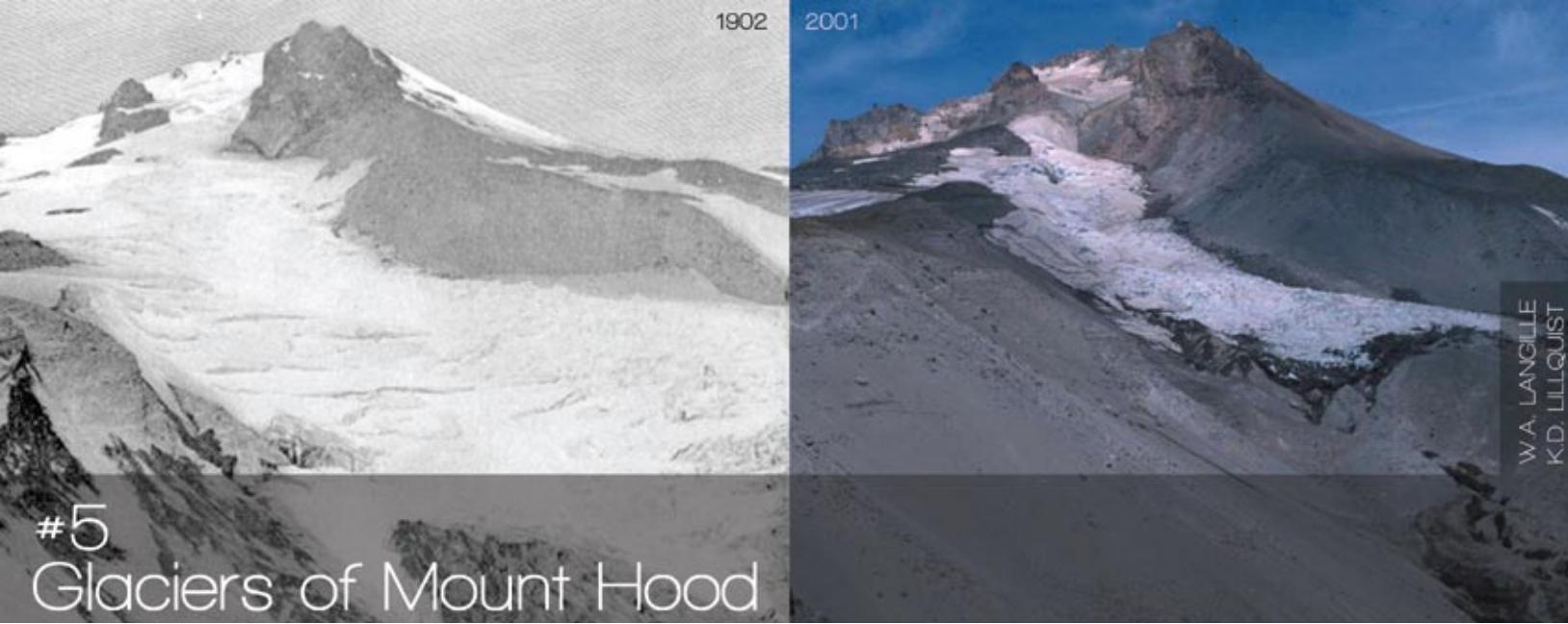
The Solution: Southwest Oregon’s public forest lands offer far more than just timber. Sound management of these forests must protect important public values, and focus on restoration – not further degradation – of watersheds like Evans Creek. To do this, land managers need to move beyond the WOPR mentality. Instead of pursuing the logging of our last remaining mature and old-growth forests, land managers should focus on restoring the damaged landscape. Restoration can include thinning in dense young plantations and reducing fuels in areas where fire once burned naturally. These activities can provide jobs in rural areas, while improving forest and watershed health.

Fast Fact:

Old-growth and mature forests in southwest Oregon’s BLM lands store climate-polluting carbon more efficiently than any other ecosystem in the U.S.

BRETT COLE The Evans Creek Timber Sale would put the northern spotted owl in even further jeopardy.





#5 Glaciers of Mount Hood

Threat: Global warming

The Place: Glaciers are large masses of snow and ice that form and solidify faster than erosion and vaporization can erode them. Oregon's iconic Mount Hood is home to twelve named glaciers or snow fields. These glaciers reside largely above timberline and their crevasses and seracs pose unique challenges for mountaineers attempting to summit Mount Hood.

Eliot Glacier is the largest glacier by volume on the mountain, spreading northeast from just below the summit. Its thickest depth measured by ice radar is an impressive 361 feet. The largest glacier by surface area is the Coe-Ladd Glacier system that faces due north.

On a broad scale, glaciers hold the largest amount of fresh water available on the globe. Seasonal melt water from Mount Hood glaciers is vitally important for summer flow in the rivers and creeks that fan out from the mountain. This water supply is crucially important for aquatic species as well as orchardists in the Hood River Valley.

The Threat: Increased global temperatures stemming from human-caused climate change have decreased glacier cover across the world. Mount Hood's glaciers are no different.

In 1901 the area of Eliot Glacier was 2.03 kilometers squared ($\pm 0.16 \text{ km}^2$) and decreased to $1.60 \pm 0.05 \text{ km}^2$ by 2004 (-19%). If that wasn't bad enough, the last decade and a half have seen even greater retreat. From 1995 to 2004, Eliot Glacier lost 0.14 km².

Mount Hood's other glaciers exhibit similar trends of retreat. The most stark example is White River Glacier. Since the early part of the 20th century, the White River Glacier has lost 61% of its area.

Overall, Mount Hood glaciers lost 34% of their ice cover in the last hundred years.

The Solution: To protect the glaciers of Mount Hood and to address the myriad problems posed by global climate change, a worldwide response is needed. Key elements of any plan to tackle global warming include reductions in energy consumption, reform of transportation of people and goods, and advancement of renewable energy options.

Here in Oregon, we have a unique opportunity to contribute our own piece of the global warming solution. Northwest old-growth forests store more carbon per acre than any other land type. Sadly, up to 90% of our old-growth forests have already been cut down, contributing massive amounts of carbon to the atmosphere. However, we have an opportunity to reverse this trend and help to spare the majestic glaciers on Mount Hood.

By protecting old-growth forests and restoring previously clear-cut areas, we can begin to capture our existing carbon pollution and start to put the brakes on global warming. Forest protection is an important step in the broader suite of solutions to stop climate change.

Source: Jackson, K.M. and Fountain, A.G. 2006. Spatial and morphological change on Eliot Glacier, Mount Hood, Oregon, USA. *Annals of Glaciology*, vol. 46, accepted.

Fast Fact:

If all land ice melted, sea level would rise approximately 225 feet worldwide.

6 Illinois River

Threat: Mining

The Place: The Illinois River begins its journey near Cave Junction and flows through 60 miles of protected and unprotected Wilderness on its way toward the majestic Rogue River and eventually the Pacific Ocean. First time visitors to the Illinois are awed by its blue-green waters, rugged serpentine canyons, and abundant recreation opportunities.

The Illinois watershed is one of Oregon's remaining salmon strongholds, boasting runs of winter and summer steelhead, Coho salmon, and chinook salmon. The Illinois provides the Rogue River with about 33 percent of its wild chinook and Coho, and 10 percent of its wild steelhead each year.

Rafters and kayakers know the Illinois for its remote and exhilarating whitewater. The river's Class V "Green Wall" rapid draws only the most skilled boaters.

The Illinois is a keystone waterway in the larger Siskiyou Wild Rivers area, known as Oregon's Yellowstone for its diverse ecology. The area is home to 1,400 known plant species – over 100 of which are found nowhere else on Earth – including 28 different types of conifer trees.

The Threat: The recent rise in the price of gold and other minerals has triggered a modern gold rush in southwest Oregon and along the Illinois River. Antiquated federal mining laws that date back to 1872

make it far too easy to stake and operate mining claims on sensitive wildlands and near salmon-bearing streams.

One of the preferred methods of mining in

this region is suction dredging—a process that "vacuums" gravel and other streambed material into a filtration system and then spits all but the gold back into the water. Dredging in a salmon bearing river significantly damages habitat for spawning and rearing fish. A recent ban on suction dredge mining in California has led to an influx of out-of-state miners, putting the Illinois and other area streams at even greater risk from the harmful effects of mining.

Things have gotten so bad that the Bureau of Land Management is currently considering a proposal for a mining operation along salmon-rich Sucker Creek. The proposal comes from a man convicted of illegally mining just two miles upstream on the same creek!

The Solution: The ultimate solution to save the Illinois River and the rest of Oregon's Yellowstone from rampant mining abuse is to protect it as Wilderness. Wilderness is the highest form of protection for federal public land and requires an act of Congress.

In addition, federal mining laws need a facelift. The 1872 Mining Law was written when pickaxes and mules were the tools of the trade and the regulation is wholly inadequate in today's age of bulldozers and suction dredge machines. Primary components of any mining law reform should include: the implementation of a royalty system, protection for sensitive roadless and wilderness-quality lands, and a requirement that miners pay to clean up their mess.

Fast Fact:

Over 880 new mining claims have been filed in the Siskiyou Wild Rivers in the past decade.





#7 Elliott State Forest

Threat: logging and herbicide spraying

The Place: The Elliott State Forest is the oldest forest that the state owns, and is home to endangered species like the marbled murrelet, spotted owl, and coho salmon. Few native forests are left in the Coast Range, making the Elliott a haven within a sea of industrial clear-cuts.

The Elliott is comprised of 93,000 acres of public forests between Reedsport, Coos Bay, and Loon Lake. This temperate rainforest burned in 1864 and recovered naturally, so today it is one of the oldest forests left in the Coast Range, with trees over 200 feet tall and over 3-4 feet across, with many even larger.

About half of the Elliott has never been logged.

The Threat: Every year the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) authorizes over 500 acres of new clear-cuts in older, native forests. After the forests are clear-cut, ODF will aerial spray toxic herbicides on any remaining brush, and poison mountain-beavers (a large, ancient rodent) so they don't chomp on the only food left – tree seedlings. The trees are planted by prisoners being paid only about \$2.00 per day for their hard labor.

FRANCIS EATHERINGTON



While the federal agencies have a harder time logging old forest habitat, the state laws are weaker. Even though this is our public forest, the state parcels it out to the timber industry, converting rare Coast Range native forests into tree plantations.

Incredibly, the Habitat Conservation Plan for northern spotted owls allows ODF to kill 43 spotted owls if they protect 26 owls on the Elliott, over the course of 60 years.

This agreement was inked in 1995. By 2000, just 5 years into the 60 year plan, all 43 unprotected spotted owls were gone – likely dead. The remaining 26 spotted owls had circles of protected trees around their nest, but in 2003, the barred owl began moving into those circles, driving spotted owls away. The Habitat Conservation Plan does not require surveys for spotted owls before clear-cutting so timber sales could be allowing spotted owl nest sites to be cut down.

The Solution: The Oregon Department of Forestry must stop logging in spotted owl and murrelet habitat and refocus their efforts on thinning in managed plantations.

Additionally, ODF should pay greater attention to managing the Elliott for other public values like recreation, education, carbon storage, and clean water.

The recreation potential on the Elliott is high. It is surrounded by high-recreation-use areas in all directions including the Oregon Dunes Recreation Visitor Center, Dean Creek Elk Viewing Area, Loon Lake (the largest natural Coastal Mountain Range lake), and Golden and Silver Falls State Park.

The Elliott is “Common School Fund Lands”, and so lends itself well as a place to educate the public on the value of native forests for wildlife, for our atmosphere, and for our clean water.

Fast Fact:

By one estimation, the Elliott's 2011 timber sale plan will release over 157,000 tonnes of carbon into the atmosphere – as much as 100,000 cars driven for a year.



#8 Coos Bay Estuary and Southwest Oregon watersheds

Threat: LNG terminal and 235-mile pipeline

The Place: Home to old-growth cathedral forests, rushing whitewater rivers, and iconic salmon, southwest Oregon is one of the last truly wild places left on the West Coast. The Coos Bay estuary and the many rivers that flow from southern Oregon's mountains to the sea provide a sanctuary for salmon, steelhead, and other aquatic wildlife.

The Coos Bay estuary is ecologically important to many fish and wildlife species. It is home to salt marshes, eelgrass, and tidal flats, providing migration routes and habitat for salmon, crabs, oysters, clams, harbor seals, oystercatchers, egrets, herons, and many other birds that stalk the estuary's mudflats. One of the nation's first Estuarine Research Reserves was established within part of the Coos Bay estuary in 1974.

The Rogue, Coquille, Umpqua, and Klamath watersheds are part of the Pacific Northwest's "salmon nation" and flow through some of the most biologically diverse temperate forests in the world. These rivers pump millions into the recreation, tourism, and fishing economies every year.

The Threat: In December 2009 the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) rubber-stamped approval for the Jordan Cove/Pacific Connector Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) import facility in Coos Bay and an associated 235-mile pipeline to California.

The proposed pipeline would cross 379 bodies of water, many of which serve as critical habitat for threatened Coho salmon, and would impact more than 6,200 acres. The water crossings would require extensive riparian cutting that would increase water temperatures in streams that already violate temperature standards for salmon and

other cold water fish.

Coos Bay itself would be tremendously impacted. Extensive dredging for terminal construction in the Coos Bay estuary will remove enough material to fill the Rose Bowl stadium in Pasadena nearly 14 times. Additionally, more than 80 miles of public land and waters along the pipeline route and 150 pipeline miles on private property will be degraded.

Perhaps most troubling is that FERC based their determination on an inadequate body of information, failed to demonstrate an adequate purpose or need for the project, and did not weigh reasonable alternatives.

The Solution:

The terminal and associated pipeline should not be built. As the devastating effects of the recent offshore oil rig explosion in the Gulf of Mexico continue to reverberate throughout the Gulf Coast and across the globe, it is increasingly apparent that our nation's reliance on a rapidly dwindling supply of fossil fuels leads to a dead end. Energy development in southern Oregon should focus on increased efficiency and renewable sources, not petroleum imports.

The State of Oregon retains some political and legal options for stopping this runaway project. Since the state is charged with implementing the provisions of the Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act, it can deny permit applications under these cornerstone environmental laws.

Fast Fact:

The proposed pipeline would cross at least 379 water bodies and would impact 29 species listed as endangered or threatened, including six species of whale.

Pipeline construction threatens prime habitat for salmon and steelhead and would carve through precious public and private land.





GREG BURKE

#9 Steens Mountain

Threat: Industrial energy development

The Place: Steens Mountain lies along the horizon of southeastern Oregon like a sleeping giant among a bed of sagebrush, perennial grasses, and wildflowers surrounded by a semi-arid desert. Although people mistake it for a chain of mountains, it is instead one contiguous monolith—the largest fault block mountain in North America, reaching a mile vertically, with summits that overlook the Alvord Desert, wide canyons, and Donner und Blitzen River. The mountain's dark undulating slopes and stern ridgelines can be seen for miles, making Steens the Oregon high desert's "crown jewel." It is a gem noted for its unrefined stark beauty—something wholly original in a seemingly uniform shrub sea home to sage-grouse, golden eagles, falcons, pronghorn, and other wild residents.

The mountain and its surrounds are among the greatest undeveloped landscapes in Oregon. As an unusually large and diverse complex of relatively intact natural systems, Steens Mountain has long been recognized for its importance as a reservoir of biological diversity. As described in the Steens Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000, the current character and use of the lands on Steens Mountain include "grazing, recreation, historic, and other uses that are sustainable," "traditional access to cultural, gathering, religious, and archaeological sites," and the conservation and protection of "geological, biological, wildlife, riparian, and scenic resources." No industrial development exists on the mountain or within the Cooperative Management and Protection Area (CMPA), with development limited to private ranches and small-scale or primitive campgrounds and recreation facilities.

The Threat: Industrial scale wind energy development proposed by Columbia Energy Partners

threatens not only the unique beauty of Steens, but also avian species that use the north-south facing escarpment as a migratory pathway and nest in surrounding shrub-steppe habitat. The site is just a few miles from the Steens Wilderness area and two of the proposed projects fall within the CMPA—which was intended to remain undeveloped under the Steens Act.

Sec. 122(a) of the Steens CMPA states: the "Development on public and private lands within the boundaries of Cooperative Management and Protection Area which is different from the current character and uses of the lands is inconsistent with the purposes of the Act."

The Solution: Energy development doesn't belong everywhere, and lands in Oregon are vast and varied. We should develop lands that will not have the wildlife or scenic impacts the proposed Steens Wind Project would likely have on this iconic landscape.

Landowners within the CMPA can access public funds allocated in the Steens Act to compensate them for protecting the ecological value of their land.

Fast Fact:

There are four immense U-shaped gorges – Kiger, Little Blitzen, Big Indian, and Wildhorse—that were formed during the Ice Age by glaciers that made trenches about one-half mile deep through layers of hard basalt.



USFWS

Large-scale development near Steens would have dire consequences for the sage grouse.



#10 Mount Bailey Roadless Area

Threat: Roadless logging, OHVs

The Place: Mount Bailey is the classic High Cascades volcano that gives its name to the 18,000 acre roadless area surrounding its flanks. The mountain is one of Oregon's most accessible peaks. Hikers who reach the summit are rewarded with spectacular views that include Diamond Lake, Crater Lake National Park, and Mt. Thielsen.

The mountain itself is a rare peak out of alignment with the rest of the Cascade crest. Though President Grover Cleveland set aside the area in 1886 as part of what later became Crater Lake National Park, it was left outside the boundary of the park when legislation finally passed in 1902. The area's porous soils provide clean, pure water for nearby springs and its wildlands provide some of the most promising habitat for wolverines and other rare wildlife.

The area is a mecca for outdoor enthusiasts. It is one of the last unprotected undeveloped strongholds for outdoor recreation opportunities like hiking, hunting, skiing, and wildlife watching left in the Umpqua National Forest.

The Threat: Reckless logging and roadbuilding during the 20th century drastically reduced the size of the roadless area. Unfortunately, it continues to be threatened by a Forest Service Supervisor intent upon pursuing a timber sale based on outdated

ideology. After being highlighted as the #1 threat in last year's report and facing national scrutiny, the Umpqua National Forest scaled back the D-Bug Timber Sale. Even so, the project still includes more roadless logging than occurred across the entire country during eight years of the Bush administration. A final proposal continues to be delayed. The area's sensitive soils, habitat, and solitude are also threatened by overuse and abuse by snowmachines and other destructive OHVs.

The Solution: In the short-term, the area is protected by the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule. It is critical that the current administration honor its promise to uphold the Rule. Oregon's leaders also must remain outspoken in their support of common sense roadless protections and champion efforts to codify them into law.

Still, the Umpqua National Forest has continually attempted to abuse the letter and spirit of the Roadless Rule to justify logging schemes like D-Bug. Thinning forests to protect homes and

human life from the threat of wildfire makes sense. Commercial logging and road building in remote backcountry does not. In early 2010, Oregon Wild created a Citizen's Alternative to the D-Bug Sale that earned the support of over a dozen recreation and conservation groups. The plan achieves the laudable goal of protecting human life and property without destroying some of Oregon's most precious wildlands.

Ultimately, the area needs to be protected as the wilderness it is and is deservedly included in the Crater Lake Wilderness proposal. Such protections are needed to prevent more destructive development like destination resorts, snowcat rides, OHV abuse, and helicopter tours. A Wilderness designation would preserve some of Oregon's most accessible quiet recreation opportunities and is critical to protecting the remaining pristine backcountry of the Umpqua National Forest from future logging schemes like D-Bug.

Fast Fact:

Mount Bailey is a vision quest site for Native Americans who call it Medicine Mountain.

Oregon Wild 2010 Accomplishments

After high hopes for the new presidential administration were tempered by a mixed bag of results in 2009 (canceling the Bush old-growth logging scheme but also stripping ESA protections for wolves), Oregon Wild looked to 2010 undaunted. With a smattering of Wilderness and Wild & Scenic bills before Congress and historical agreements between conservationists and timber industry representatives in the offing, here are a few of our success stories from 2010:

- Introduction and Senate hearings for the Oregon Eastside Forest Restoration, Old-Growth Protection, and Jobs Act, a bill that would protect ancient forests and restore degraded lands on 8.3 million acres east of the Cascades. The legislation was brokered by Oregon Wild, our conservation allies, and timber industry officials with the help of U.S. Senator Ron Wyden.
- After years of back and forth, the Oregon State Marine Board approved the gas motor ban at Waldo Lake. Oregon Wild defended the ban in court, mobilized citizen action to support the protection of the lake and now, finally, the solitude and clarity of one of the purest lakes in the world is preserved.
- Legislation to designate the Molalla Wild & Scenic River and the Devil's Staircase Wilderness moved forward in Congress, passing out of the full House of Representatives and out of Senate committee.
- Two Oregon Wild legal actions delivered big wins for Oregon's wolves. First, in July Oregon Wild and our allies successfully halted a hunt that sought to exterminate two Oregon gray wolves. In August, as part of an Earthjustice lawsuit, Oregon Wild won back Endangered Species Act protections for gray wolves in the northern Rockies region (that includes the eastern third of Oregon). Wolves had been faced with ever-increasing efforts to drastically reduce their population and now the federal government will have to come up with a plan that protects these iconic animals for the long term.

To get involved in the effort to protect and restore Oregon's endangered landscapes, become an Oregon Wild member today. To join, go to:

www.oregonwild.org/membership





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