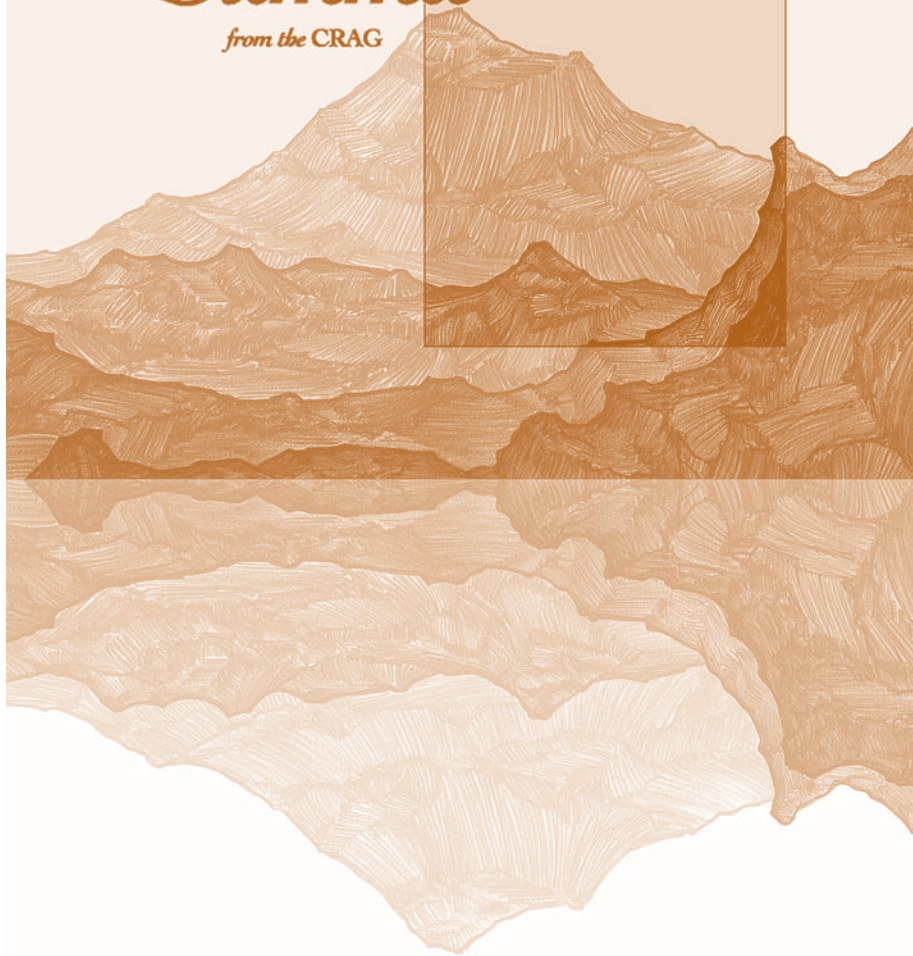


*A
View
of the
Summit*
from the CRAG



A Tribute to Mt. Hood

a View of the Summit

by Ralph Bloemers, Staff Attorney

Early in the winter of 2002, I spent a weekend at the Snowshoe Cabin, a lodge built in 1910, located in the Cloud Cap/Tilly Jane Historic District on the north side of Mt. Hood. Twenty-five hundred feet below, I ran into a fellow named Kevin who was putting climbing skins on his telemark skis. Kevin was headed to the Cloud Cap Inn to spend the weekend with fellow Crag Rats, an alpine rescue group from the Hood River Valley. I asked if I could join him, and he said I was welcome to if I didn't mind taking a roundabout way up.

We skinned up the Cloud Cap Road and turned into the forest right after Tilly Jane Creek. Kevin shared stories about his work as a forester for the Peace Corps in Central America and his current work for the Forest Service's Mt. Hood Ranger District as its recreational planner. He described his Peace Corps project largely as a green-washing effort by an industrial logging company attempting to build an image of social

and environmental stewardship. The journey was steep but enlightening.

When I asked him why we were taking this route, Kevin stated that he was scoping out potential glade ski runs for Mt. Hood Meadows. Coincidentally, a forest watchdog group had recently asked me to look at a timber sale in the same location that we were "scoping" for ski runs. For a split second, I felt like I was hiding something. A feeling of betrayal quickly replaced that absurd notion — the Forest Service was planning a large scale industrial strength logging project in the woods enjoyed by so many for back-country non-mechanized recreation, and the public knew next to nothing about it. Kevin described plans to build a base lodge below the Cloud Cap Road, a high-speed quad over a historic back-country ski trail, a mid-mountain restaurant along that same trail and about five or six other lifts one of which would run right up to the historic district just below the Cloud Cap Inn. My mind reeled at the prospect of the tremendous cumulative impacts on the environment.

That weekend, I learned that Meadows had privately met with groups in an effort to gain buy-in on its plans. In those meetings, Meadows claimed that the ski expansion plans were not tied to the plans to develop a massive destination resort. Now the cat is out of the bag, and Meadows can no longer deny intimate linkage between the two. Any resort developer worth his salt knows you get higher prices for real estate if it is connected to a ski area on public lands.

Ironically, Meadows is now using the same tactics Kevin found so distasteful in Central America. Meadows has hired

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local public relations contractors Stu and Kathy Watson to convince the public that Meadows has found an environmentally friendly way to build a massive destination resort on the pristine flanks of Mt. Hood's north side. Meadows calls the Watsons its "Sustainable Business" managers. Staying on message, the Watsons claim to be "embarking on an exciting new adventure — helping [Meadows] learn and apply the framework of The Natural Step."

The Natural Step, for those who have not heard of it, provides a set of broad principles that a business can use to assess its footprint on the earth.

However, quite tellingly, the Watsons state that "[i]n the case of Mt. Hood Meadows, 'sustainability' as a corporate value will mean much more than a cynical grab at marketing spin." For me, Meadows' ploy is not just a marketing spin; it is also a blatant attempt to green wash the public into believing an "eco-resort" can and should be built. Meadows refuses to consider the impacts of a resort in the first place. Among other things, the development would sever the last remaining east-west corridor for migrating elk.

I recently attended a "public" (invitation only) meeting that Meadows hosted to boast about its ever-changing development plans. Rather than feeling like Meadows had addressed community concerns, I left asking myself where is

the "fresh, systems-based look at everything [Meadows] does in terms of its impact on the environment" that the Watsons talked about on their website?

Instead, Meadows is hotly contesting the Oregon Health Division's determination regarding the boundaries of the Crystal



Mt. Hood's north side, photo by Darryl Lloyd

Springs watershed which underlies its land holdings and provides drinking water to 25% of the county's residents. Meadows still plans to build a 450-unit destination resort. Meadows still plans to build a golf course on the trade land. Meadows still intends to greatly expand the ski area, and in Phase 1 it proposes to directly enter the Tilly Jane roadless area and cross the historic Tilly Jane Ski Trail numerous times. Meadows still has a bad environmental track record.

We have dedicated this issue of the Summit to Mt. Hood, because as far as we can tell the elk and deer don't care whether the low-flush eco-toilets that Meadows plans to use are in mauve or taupe, and neither do we. Please join in our efforts to protect and defend her natural beauty. •



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Paving Paradise – Mt. Hood Meadows’ Track Record of “Sustainable Development”

by Chris Winter, Staff Attorney

Back during the greatest period of environmental legislation this country has ever seen, Joni Mitchell sang eloquently of the struggle to protect our natural heritage from the ever present march of development and economic growth. In *Big Yellow Taxi*, she decried the destruction of our forests for development of resorts.

*They paved paradise
And put up a parking lot
With a pink hotel, a boutique
And a swinging hot spot
Don't it always seem to go
That you don't know what you've got
Till it's gone
They paved paradise
And put up a parking lot.*

More than three decades later, Joni's poetic words still ring true in the old-growth forests of Mt. Hood. The spotted owls, the dwindling populations of native fish and the thousands of people that rely on her solitude and natural beauty – they all sing songs of sorrow for *Wy'East*.

Mt. Hood Meadows has already developed the east side of the mountain, with a massive ski area that stretches from Heather Canyon to the top of the White River drainage. Now, Franklin Drake, a Portland developer, intends to bring the same environmental ethic to the north side of Mt. Hood and Cooper Spur. Joni's voice now echoes that much louder through the tree tops of the wilderness.

“But wait!” exclaims Meadows. “We are professional developers. We know how to do this right, and we won't damage a thing.” Meadows would like us to believe that ski area expansion, 450 housing units, huge parking lots, shopping

centers, tennis courts, swimming pools and trophy homes can peacefully coexist with steelhead, elk, black bears and spotted owls. So where's the proof?

Meadows, in fact, has a long track record of degradation at its original ski area, a track record it attempts to brush off as old news. Situated in the fragile headwaters of the East Fork of the Hood River, Mt. Hood Meadows has filled wetlands, caused huge oil spills, clearcut fragile alpine ecosystems, and destroyed habitat for the spotted owl. Mt. Hood Meadows and the Forest Service will shrug off these accusations and talk in circles until they are blue in the face. The documents, however, don't lie.

In 1998, a coalition of conservation groups led by Friends of Mt. Hood sued Mt. Hood Meadows for violations of the Clean Water Act. According to the lawsuit, Mt. Hood Meadows had filled wetlands and streams in the Main Base, Heather Canyon, Shooting Star, Hood River Meadows and several places within the main ski area. The Army Corps of Engineers even cited Meadows for similar violations. Mt. Hood Meadows, of course, maintained its innocence but did not want to bring these issues before a judge. In early 2000, Meadows settled with the conservation groups, agreeing to obtain long overdue permits and partially mitigate for the impacts of its illegal fills.

“Oh, but that's old news,” says Mt. Hood Meadows. “We settled, because we wanted to clean up our act.”

The problem, however, is that Meadows hasn't improved its performance much. In April 2002, an employee from Mt. Hood Meadows

called the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (“DEQ”) to report a diesel spill that Meadows had failed to report to the authorities. (DEQ OERS No. 02-0823.) Between 25 to 100 gallons of diesel appears to have leaked into the East Fork of the Hood River.

The 2002 incident wasn’t the first time that Meadows had contaminated Mt. Hood’s alpine ecosystem with petroleum products. Between 1996 and 1998, DEQ forced Meadows to clean up at least seven different sites at the ski area, all of which had been contaminated by spills and leaking underground storage tanks. Meadows had to excavate over 1,200 tons of contaminated soil — 2,400,000 pounds of soil!



Excavating contaminated soil from Mt. Hood’s Meadows, photo by Kate McCarthy

“How many times do we have to tell you, we have changed our ways and are on the road to sustainable stewardship?” Dave Riley, the front man for Mt. Hood Meadows, will constantly try to convince you that Meadows has corrected its problems and exists in perfect harmony with its natural setting.

Once again, a little detective work proves that these assertions are little more than cynical public relations spin designed to diffuse increasing public outrage. Mt. Hood Meadows and the Forest Service agreed on a new Master

Plan for expansion at the ski area in 1998. The Forest Service’s own documents indicate that:

1. Road work associated with expansion would kill a pair of spotted owls;
2. Increases in impervious surfaces (“paving paradise”) would likely adversely affect the steelhead trout and its habitat;
3. Increased expansion may negatively impact bull trout, redband trout and caddisfly habitat; and
4. Expansion of summer uses in the high alpine environment would likely contribute to the decline of *C. breweri*, a sensitive indicator species on the high slopes of Mt. Hood. The decline could result in the federal government having to list the species as threatened pursuant to the Endangered Species Act.

Mt. Hood Meadows still plans to expand its facilities on the east side of the mountain. Franklin Drake and Dave Riley still plan on moving forward with projects that threaten native fish, spotted owls and sensitive alpine vegetation. The list goes on and on. Friends of Mt. Hood has scores of pictures of horrible erosion and clearcuts of white bark pines that were hundreds of years old. Just this past year, Friends of Mt.

Hood documented horrendous erosion problems at Cooper Spur Ski Area. When will it stop?

Joni Mitchell sang a tune of loss and introspection, a tune that applies to Mt. Hood and Mt. Hood Meadows with the piercing honesty of her trademark style. Dave Riley and Franklin Drake, however, want you to hear a song of beauty and profit, perfectly integrated into a destination resort that sits harmoniously upon the fragile soils of Mt. Hood. Will we let them pave paradise before we realize what we’ve got? ●

FROM THE SUMMIT

Fire Mismanagement – Mt. Hood and Beyond

by Emily Bartha and Ralph Bloemers

We stand at a critical time in the fate of our public forests. The elaborate and misleading campaigns of those with interests in gaining profit from natural resources are trying to convince us that wildfire is ravaging our public forests with an unprecedented fury. The agenda to undermine decades of legislation and scientific study seeks to capitalize on the exaggerated media coverage of recent wildfires, willing politicians and our intrinsic fear of the power of fire.

The current Bush administration has proposed the Healthy Forest Initiative which claims to encourage “fuel reduction” or “thinning” projects as a means to reduce the risk of wildfire. However, this initiative would allow projects to move forward that may increase the risk of fire; and it will completely undermine citizens’ right to participate. The initiative can only be accurately described as an overhaul of environmental review that will speed up timber sales and increase profit for timber companies. Right now a rash of post-fire salvage logging and “fuels reduction” projects are coming down the pike under a slew of newly implemented changes.

These “fuels reduction” or “thinning” projects will allow logging companies to cut the largest diameter and most profitable trees, which are also the most fire resistant. However, the real fire hazards in a forest are small-diameter trees and brush; those are being left behind because they are not commercially profitable. With slash left behind from logging operations added into the equation the fuel accumulation on the forest floor is raised to a level

higher than before the thinning project began. This is one of the reasons that the citizens fighting to protect Cooper Spur have sought CRAG’s help to challenge the Polallie Cooper timber sales; a set of three sales that will remove some of the largest most commercially viable trees.

The Bush administration and a number of our politicians are also using this cynical message of fear to try to take advantage of the situation and push salvage logging projects on our public forests. Proponents of salvage logging also like to paint a picture of a burned forest as a desolate zone that is devoid of all life and in need of human intervention to avoid an occurrence of catastrophic fire. When a fire moves through forestland it does not affect each tree equally. This differentiation of burning severity is crucial in the evolution of forest ecology. Down logs and snags play a vital role in a forest ecosystem by providing critical habitat, contributing to soil health and aiding in the eventual regeneration of the forest. Many tree species show incredible tolerance to fire activity and can survive even when 90% of the crown has been burned. Down trees also hold large amounts of moisture that can potentially aid in reducing the risk of future fire.

Those pushing these messages stress the urgency with which these projects must occur. While, the health of our public forests is pressing and urgent, the real danger is not fire. Commercial thinning does not restore forest health – rather we must implement a forest policy that reflects rational science and pursue sustainable harvest practices that do not increase fire risk. Without it, we will lose

the integrity of some of our last remaining public forests.

We can deal with the fire risk issue in two ways. One, we need to take heed of our land use laws and stop converting our resource lands into communities that will inevitably need protection from fire. Second, for the existing situations where we have increased proximity between homes and forestland we need to respond with action based on science. Studies have shown that the most integral factor in determining the susceptibility of a home to burn is the existence of trees near the home. The statistics show that as long as certain fire reduction guidelines are followed at the local level of each home, the risk for ignitability during a fire occurrence is very low. Thinning projects located in the backcountry will not protect human communities.

CRAG is tracking a large number of post-fire salvage logging projects on public forestland in the Pacific Northwest. CRAG is investigating these projects to evaluate

whether their environmental impacts have been properly considered.

CRAG will be visiting sale sites to gain on-the-ground information. We welcome you to join us on one of these trips. If called upon, CRAG is prepared to pursue our public land managers in court if they do not adhere to our environmental laws. Often these requirements are not met and CRAG has been able to *successfully* litigate to stop unsound timber harvest.

If you would like more information on our fire work, please visit our website at www.crag.org, or to get involved directly, email us directly at info@crag.org. ●



Fire is a natural part of the ecosystem.

Cooper Spur Update Forest Service's Scientifically Unsound "Fire Risk" Reduction Project

by Emily Bartha

Peter H. Morrison has worked as a forest ecologist in the Oregon Cascades for over 25 years. In that time he gained firsthand experience about the relationship between forests and wildfire. He has worked on many projects and has written numerous scientific reports relating to forests and fire ecology. Last summer, on behalf of a diverse coalition of groups, CRAG brought a challenge to the Polallie Cooper logging project, a project the Forest Service billed as reducing the risk of fire on the north side of Mt. Hood. CRAG engaged Morrison to conduct a comprehensive review of the

current forest science literature and the Polallie Cooper Planning Area Environmental Assessment.

In his declaration Morrison concluded that the proposed actions will in no way reduce the risk of wildfire in the area. In fact, he determined that the commercial thinning activities such as those proposed often lead to an increased risk of wildfire. The thinning operations predominantly target large-diameter, healthy, and economically valuable trees instead of the young small ones that are more susceptible to fire. Slash left behind from

continued on page 14

Trading Away the County's Watershed for Peanuts

by *Ralph Bloemers, Staff Attorney*

In August of 2001, the Hood River County Board of Commissioners held a meeting where four of five commissioners voted to trade over 600 acres of land high on the flanks of Mt. Hood to an affiliate of Mt. Hood Meadows Development Corporation. While it was no secret that Meadows had been gunning for over 30 years to develop a destination resort in the upper valley, the County and Meadows front man Dave Riley told the public that they were not aware of any plans for development of a destination resort. Local residents were obviously suspicious. Yet the County proceeded to value the land at \$325 per acre in October and then finalized the deal in March 2002 over the protests of the Hood River Valley Residents Committee.

Was the public right to express concern? What was going on behind the scenes? To the Hood River Valley Residents Committee the deal smelled funny, and so they engaged CRAG to look into the deal a bit closer. CRAG filed suit and through discovery, we learned what the public was not told:

1. The Chair of the Board of Commissioners, the Planning Director and the County Administrator (the top official of the County next to the Commissioners) met privately with Dave Riley to discuss the deal and methods to get simultaneous land use approval for a destination resort well prior to the "public" meeting in August. The plaintiffs obtained a memo establishing that David Riley showed Chair Arens, Michael Benedict and David Meriwether an aerial photo of the lands subject to the trade as the

participants discussed ways to site a destination resort on that land.

2. Dave Riley submitted part of a professional appraisal to the County that suggested that Meadows' adjacent forest land was worth at the very least seven times more per-acre than the value the County assigned to the land. The valuation provided by Meadows was based upon the use allowed under existing zoning.

3. Meadows representatives met with County officials, including the Planning Director Michael Benedict, County Administrator Dave Meriwether and County Counsel Wil Carey to show them a detailed development plan for the County property that Meadows was to receive in the trade. We obtained a copy of the development plans which show 450 units of development including a golf-course with subdivision style homes around it and high-end trophy homes with million dollar views.

4. The County valued its land for its existing use as forestland for commercial timber production, despite the fact that more valuable uses were allowed under current zoning and that the County was in the middle of active and detailed discussions with Meadows about a zone change that would allow the resort.

5. Before the valuation was even completed, Meadows provided the County with an outline and agenda at the October 2, 2001 meeting detailing a zone change that would allow a destination resort. Meadows also provided the County a list of the team they assembled to help plan, design and implement the development.

For the Residents Committee, the story of a backroom deal by their elected officials has only become easier to tell. While Meadows' and the County's attorneys initially argued in the local paper that the County considered the highest and best use of the property (an appraisal term meaning they actually looked at its value on the open market), Meadows and the County are now claiming that the County has discretion to value the property however it deems fit regardless of its true value.

The County also paid Meadows over one-million-dollars to complete the trade, despite the fact that the state statute authorizing land trades does not allow for such a payment. As part of the trade, the County received land that Meadows owned lower in the valley. In the 80s Meadows had tried to develop part of this property on the basis that the land was worthless for timber production, yet the County claimed that it was getting valuable timberland.

What is even more upsetting to local residents was the fact that the land that Meadows received from the County was smack dab on top of the Crystal Springs recharge area as mapped by the Oregon Health Division. The Crystal Springs is a shallow aquifer that provides drinking and irrigation water for over 25% of the County residents. So, not only did the County trade away land for a fraction of its fair value, pay over one-million-dollars to complete the deal, but the County traded away the watershed to a

company that has a long track record of environmental degradation and abuse.

Of course, Meadows has put up quite a fight to protect the thunderclouds looming over its title to the property. Meadows has filed numerous dilatory motions on procedural technicalities, threatened to seek attorneys fees from the plaintiffs twice, repeatedly stalled on providing discovery and has made numerous inherently contradictory arguments to maintain its grip on this extremely valuable piece of real estate.

Who can blame them? I guess if I received land worth \$160,000 per acre for the paltry sum of \$325 per acre, I would fight tooth and nail to keep it. Fortunately, for the residents of the Upper Valley and Mt. Hood, neither the Hood River Valley Residents Committee nor Mike McCarthy are deterred by Meadows scare tactics and seemingly endless financial resources.

For them, this is about preserving their agricultural way of life, their recreational opportunities, and the untrammelled north side of Mt. Hood. And for CRAG, this is where our

mission is put into action, as we provide this small, grassroots citizen organization with the legal muscle that has allowed them to challenge the trade in court. Stay tuned; in the coming months CRAG will appeal a pending judgment from Hood River County Circuit Court and will argue a pending appeal before the Oregon Court of Appeals. Feel free to contact us for more information on the suit or visit our website for the legal pleadings in this case. •



Art by Shannon Wheeler

Bush's Environmental Track Record, part 2

by Brian Litmans, Board Member

In CRAG's last Summit I discussed Bush's two-part plan to rollback environmental enforcement. Bush's siege continues. The latest evidence of Bush's unwritten policy is the EPA's fiscal budget request for 2004. *Congress Daily* noted that despite repeated requests for additional staff and resources, the agency's top political brass has turned a blind eye to EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance's struggles. EPA's top officials dispute any problem with the Enforcement program despite the fact that it has compiled a backlog of thousands of uninvestigated cases. Not only is the Enforcement program's budget likely to be frightfully inadequate, what precious resources exists are now being directed towards homeland security operations.

EPA's numbers provide more unsettling news that "environmental enforcement" is a four-letter word for Bush. Compared to Clinton's final two years, EPA inspections of polluting industries has dropped 15%, criminal cases referred for federal prosecution have dropped 40%, and the amount of pollution reduced or prevented as a result of EPA's legal actions has plummeted from 7.5 billion pounds to 921 million pounds. This dramatic drop in pollution prevention, shown by some of the agency's own reports, is unfortunately more than just numbers on paper.

Further alarm for environmentalists lies in the likely successor for EPA Administrator. In May 2003, Christie Whitman delivered her resignation letter. Whitman showed, through numerous occasions, that she was willing to tow the party line. However, if nominee Mike Leavitt, Governor of Utah, takes control of EPA, he will do far more than tow the line. A staunch conservative who is more concerned with reducing costs for industry compliance than protection of the environment, Leavitt is prepared to implement his philosophy of *enlibra*, Latin for "in balance," which translates to "deregulation" in Bushese. It looks like we have much to fear from what many are calling the "Environmental Pollution Agency" in the months to come. See www.westgov.org/wga/initiatives/enlibra/default.htm to learn more about the principle soon to be adopted by the White House and EPA. ●



Our Work to Protect Old Growth

The BLM tells the public that it is not logging old growth, yet in a project just north of the Rogue River the BLM is logging 460-year-old Douglas fir that provide critical habitat for the endangered northern spotted owl. On behalf of the Klamath Siskiyou Wildlands Center, Headwaters, Umpqua Watersheds, and the Oregon Natural Resources Council, CRAG stepped in to challenge this project. Despite plain direction from the BLM's own management plan, the BLM failed to consider the risk of the spread of a deadly plant pathogen that is fatal to Port Orford cedar trees as well as the cumulative effects of logging some of the last remaining old-growth habitat in the West Fork of the Cow Creek Watershed. Ralph Bloemers argued the case in Eugene, Oregon, before Judge Michael Hogan, who has still not issued a ruling in that case over 100 days after the suit was filed.

CRAG also secured an unprecedented victory in the Gifford Pinchot National

Forest on behalf of Biodiversity Northwest, Gifford Pinchot Taskforce, Northwest Ecosystem Alliance, and Northwest Environmental Defense Center. CRAG filed suit against the Forest Service alleging that the Lock and Swell timber sales would illegally cut millions of board feet of old-growth timber. The parties entered into settlement negotiations, and three weeks later they agreed on a landmark agreement. The parties settled claims on five separate timber sales – Lock, Swell, Alpha, Beta and Omega. The plaintiffs agreed to approximately 3 to 4 million-board-feet of medium to heavy retention thinning (no clear cuts) and, in exchange, the Forest Service dropped approximately 30 million-board-feet of logging! This case demonstrates that conservation groups can work with the Forest Service and that the timber industry's pleas for relief from the irrational greens should fall on deaf ears. ●



Old growth cut this spring at the Mr. Wilson timber sale on Medford BLM, photo courtesy Headwaters Environmental Center and KS Wild

Labor of Passion – Climbing the Spire

by Kris Nelson, Advancement Director

A poet named Rumi once wrote, “Passion makes the old medicine new: Passion lops off the bough of weariness. Passion is the elixir that renews.” As we consider the daunting challenges that lie ahead, keeping this perspective invokes resolve, fortitude and courage — inspiration that feeds my work with CRAG.

I am excited to work with CRAG on fund raising and organizational advancement for several reasons. One big one is this: unless we commit ourselves to making real differences in our troubled world, we will continue to hobble along, perhaps mustering trivial ripples of change with little long term consequences. In considering CRAG’s work, it became obvious to me that this organization exudes commitment. Yes, CRAG has a powerful ethos — a deep passion for safeguarding, stewarding and speaking for the natural life support systems in the Northwest that we all depend on and enjoy. That is what spurs me on!

What also drew me to CRAG is their unique scope of services. Not only do they take on the Goliaths of pillage and destruction, but they also give valuable legal support to groups protecting our wild lands. That means helping groups become incorporated as nonprofits, providing contracting advice, securing trademarks, and, we hope in the future, assisting groups with planned giving programs. Such services are not

delivered at going rates for law firms. Typically, they are provided at about 30 percent of normal market rates, and many times they are provided *pro bono* or for free. Last year, for example, CRAG’s staff attorneys provided well over 1,500 hours of legal services to its clients. That is worth over \$300,000 at professional rates, yet CRAG was only paid about \$12,000 by its clients for this time.

The point is that CRAG, to continue providing such low cost yet professional legal services to nonprofits, will depend on individual donors, foundations, fund raising events and other resources.

CRAG is not a high-fee law firm with profits in mind; instead it has made protection of our natural heritage by ensuring effective public participation its top priority.

CRAG stretches its limited resources to accomplish greatness, and as a result your support has a huge impact on the ground. We are planning several ways for you to continue to support CRAG, in ways that are fun or easy. First, this Fall we are planning a fundraiser with a bluegrass band, local microbrews and other refreshments. Second, I am also excited to pioneer an affordable way for donors to budget support for CRAG without breaking the bank. If you find that budgeting a small donation each month (or quarter) is easier than giving in a lump sum; you can arrange that by visiting our Web site or by contacting us directly at info@crag.org. By enrolling in “CRAG Spires,” you can choose to either



set up electronic funds transfer from your checking account or arrange for a monthly deduction from your credit card. As a new service, we encourage your feedback on how to improve it. You can change or stop your enrollment in CRAG Spires at any time by notifying us.

We are kicking off our 2003 supporter drive! First, what would truly contribute to helping CRAG defend the pristine watersheds of the Northwest is to help us broaden the circle of CRAG supporters. Do you have a few friends you would like to tell about CRAG? Know some back-country skiers who are interested in helping us protect the Mt. Hood's historic Tilly Jane Cooper Spur back-country area from an ambitious developer with short-term real estate profits on his mind? We are happy to help you put together a personalized appeal to your friends and family – challenging them to make the same commitment you have made. We would also be very excited to get you directly involved in our work. Some of our members have already committed to the friends-asking-friends way to help us meet our goal of growing to 2000 supporters by 2005. In short, we will bend over

backwards to assist you in helping us reach out to others. And we will make sure to get you involved in our work despite the relentless and time consuming litigation tactics employed by our adversaries.

Second, we have decided to make extra efforts to recognize our more sizeable donors and committed volunteers with the creation of a donor group. "CRAG Partners" will recognize those who donate more than \$100 a year or 20 hours of volunteer time a year. Our Partners will receive notification of special opportunities to join with CRAG staff in advocating for protection of our public lands and ecosystems.

CRAG thanks you for your benevolent support. As we move forward, we welcome any volunteer time that you can give. We think we can make your experience fun and rewarding, and it will give a chance to connect with on our on-the-ground efforts. Feel free to call us directly or drop us an email and let us know if you would like to help us defend our precious wild lands and watersheds: 503-525-2724 or info@crag.org. ●

An Update on Our Clean Water Act Enforcement Work

CRAG continues to defend our waterways by enforcing the Clean Water Act. We are working with Larry Tuttle and the Center for Environmental Equity to bring an abandoned mine that is leaching heavy metals into the Wild and Scenic Rogue River into compliance with the Clean Water Act. CRAG is also working with a coalition of fisherperson groups and environmental organizations to bring a cutting-edge challenge to state hatcheries run by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. These hatcheries

have been repeatedly violating the Clean Water Act. Since the last issue of the Summit, CRAG also settled two pending CWA cases – one against a mobile home park in Southern Oregon and one against Permapost Products. Finally, we recently sent a 60-day notice of intent to sue to Rosboro Lumber Co. for violations of a stormwater permit. Until Oregon's legislature and DEQ develop the budget and political will to implement the Clean Water Act, we will continue to protect our water quality throughout the state. ●

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

Hood River Valley Residents Committee

The Hood River Valley Residents Committee (HRVRC) is a land use watchdog group based in Hood River County, Oregon, that takes action to protect lands stretching from the mighty Columbia River to the alpine flanks high on stoic Mt. Hood. It spends a significant amount of time defending the Hood River Valley's productive pear farms from conversion. HRVRC is on one of the most active citizen coalitions in Hood River County; it originated in response to concerns over the implementation of land use laws in 1977. It has over 130 families as members, many of whom are farmers in the valley. In 1983, the group organized considerable citizen input as part of a proposed destination resort by Mt. Hood Meadows and successfully defeated that proposal.

In August of 2000, HRVRC was amazed to see its County government authorize the transfer of public land to a private

developer for a fraction of its fair value. HRVRC sought to participate in the public process on the trade, and raised concerns about the valuation methodology that was employed. Rather than receiving a response to its concerns, the County completely shut HRVRC out of the process. As a result, Mike McCarthy, a member of HRVRC and local pear farmer, contacted CRAG to see if we would be willing to challenge this back-room deal in court. Despite the slanted coverage in the local paper, a never ending barrage of procedural shenanigans by the developer's attorneys and unfavorable rulings by the local judge, HRVRC remains undeterred. It continues to have unshakable resolve — determined in the face of endless financial resources and captured local politicians — it remains focused on obtaining a determination on the lawsuit's merits and a remedy ordering the deal to be undone. ●

Fire Risk continued...

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bulldozers and chain saws is seldom cleaned up, creating a potential fire hazard. Morrison recommends prescribed burning and selective thinning of small-diameter trees and removal of the lower limbs of trees and brush as far more effective alternatives to preventing stand-replacing fires.

Without the assumption that the proposed commercial thinning will reduce the risk of fire it is exceedingly implausible for the project to be justified for anything other than commercial purposes. Morrison's qualified analysis of the situation sheds light on the invalidity of current methods and makes a strong

case for the need of new methods based on accurate and current scientific knowledge. While changes may need to occur in forest management, Morrison's declaration underscores that those changes should be guided by science and reason, not fallacies, superficial analysis and economic gain. Otherwise the ultimate goal – protection of communities from fire – does not stand a chance of being realized.

Contact Ralph Bloemers at ralph@crag.org or Sandi Scheinberg at sandi@bark-out.org for more information on the Polallie Cooper logging project and what you can do about it. ●

BLM Timber Plan Questioned... Once Again

by Emily Bartha

Any future post-fire salvage logging operations that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has in store for our public lands will prove much more difficult to complete without utilizing science and reason thanks to a recent decision by Federal District Judge Ancer Haggerty. A permanent injunction now bans all logging activities in the Timber Basin area without the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The mandatory EIS will force the BLM to thoroughly consider the negative ecological impacts of future logging proposals before timber sales are made.

The ruling strikes yet another blow to the scientific validity of the BLM's "Timber Basin Wildfire Rehabilitation Plan" which inaccurately depicts logging projects as rehabilitation efforts instead of timber sales seeking to maximize the economic value from the area at the expense of the already scarred landscape. Further implementation of the Timber Basin logging project hinges on the willingness of the BLM to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act.

This ruling is a victory for scientifically sound and ecologically based forest practices that will protect the vitality of our public forests. In response, the BLM has filed an appeal of Judge Haggerty's ruling. CRAG intends to defend it on appeal. •

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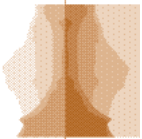
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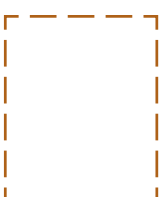
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