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## Attributes

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## Comments

STRENGTHEN YOUR NEW FOREST PLANNING RULE NOW!

The new forest planning rule is actually less protective of the environment than the Reagan administration's 1982 rule it would replace.

The groups say the proposed rule:

- \* removes national standards in favor of local leniency. Secretary Vilsack said the new system is designed to treat forests with "individual identities," which environmental groups say is what Teddy Roosevelt was trying to avoid by creating the National Forest System.
- \* eases 1982 protections for species by giving special treatment only to species with "evidence demonstrating significant concern" instead of "all native vertebrate species."
- \* replaces the appeal process with a 30-day pre-decisional objection process.
- \* over-emphasizes action to make forests more resilient (which might require logging), and fails to provide an explicit goal to manage the National Forests to store more carbon and keep it out of the atmosphere which would mitigate global warming.
- \* allows the plan to be amended to bring new, conflicting projects into compliance.

Every weekend, millions of Americans head out to places like the Mount Hood National Forest. For most, opportunities to see abundant wildlife, swim or fish in clean lakes and rivers, or enjoy traditional quiet recreation, are a central part of why they enjoy America's public lands. Unfortunately, draft Forest Service planning rules released today by the Obama administration would make the protection of those values optional.

When President Roosevelt created the National Forest System, he did so to stop the destruction of America's natural treasures at the hands of logging, drilling, mining, and other development interests. Today's new rules are a departure from Roosevelt's vision.

Conservationists expected that any new rules would be at least as protective as those created during the Reagan administration. The Reagan planning rules included mandatory requirements to maintain healthy, sustainable fish and wildlife populations and clean water. The new regulations issued today make protection of these basic values optional, and at the discretion of local forest supervisors.

In Oregon, we've seen the result of decades of mismanagement at the hands of old-school forest managers in places like the Umpqua National Forest, where tens of thousands of acres have been ravaged by clear cuts. The Obama administration's proposed rules could open the floodgates for more destructive projects. Additionally, these new rules tie the hands of American citizens seeking to hold the Forest Service accountable for how our public lands are managed.

From wolves and eagles to elk and salmon, Oregon's wildlife, wildlands, and water are facing unprecedented threats. What they need are strong, clear, national standards that promote conservation. Unfortunately, the draft rules released by the Obama administration today fall far short!

**Individual(s)**

<b>Organization Type</b>	Individual
<b>Email Address</b>	stulips@hotmail.com
<b>Name</b>	STUART PHILLIPS
<b>City</b>	EUGENE
<b>State</b>	OREGON
<b>Country</b>	UNITED STATES
<b>Created On</b>	2/11/2011 5:26:00 PM