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Steve Hobbs, Chair, Members of The Federal Forestland Advisory Committee and
Facilitator Robert Fisher:

Rural Oregon and Federal Forestlands

The economic conditions in Rural Oregon continue to decline causing further reductions in funding schools, roads and County services. The Federal Forestland Advisory Committee must address a proposed Federal Forest Management Plan to utilize the federal timber supply in Oregon very soon.

The November 5th Committee meeting agenda requested public comments on issues the FFAC should consider regarding timber harvest and infrastructure. Excellent testimony was presented by representatives from ARFC and AOL. Both organizations cited the drastic reduction of federal timber supply in the past 20-25 years as the chief reason for the loss of infrastructure and the declining employment rate in Rural Oregon as the main reason for this economic dilemma.

As a possible federal forest management plan, we suggest a program to utilize a portion of the past 20 years of timber growth, less the loss by wildfire, insects, rot, and wind throw be considered the immediate sources of this volume. The use of this available timber could begin providing economic relief to Rural Oregon quickly and allow the infrastructure to expand at a reasonable rate.

E.D. Hovee has estimated total forest growth in Oregon to be 10.4 billion bd. ft. annually. Yearly loss from all sources is estimated to be 2.4 billion. Net growth volume for the entire State is estimated to be at 8.0 billion bd. ft. annually.

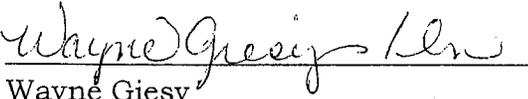
The Federal ownership of forestland in Oregon is 57% of the total forest acreage. Federal forestlands then account for approximately half of the statewide annual growth or approximately 4.0 billion bd. ft. Therefore, in the last 20-25 years the Federal Forestlands could have accumulated 80.0 billion bd. ft., or more, new timber volume through growth.

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Many mills and other infrastructure facilities have had to drastically reduce operations or shut down entirely. These will need some time to regain the past level of operations. Therefore, as an immediate conservative short term solution to the current federal timber famine in Rural Oregon, we suggest beginning with a timber harvest of 300 million/500 million bd. ft. and increase the harvest by this amount annually until 3 billion bd. ft. is reached which then could constitute the yearly harvest level. This would allow orderly federal timber sale preparation and permit industry infrastructure to regain its former stature.

During this short term plan of operation, however, the federal timber supply could be studied again in depth, especially federal forest growth and timber loss data. A new and complete Federal Forestland Management Plan of timber harvest, less a pre-determined volume of timber inventory increase, could then be developed for the long term economic benefit of Oregon's County Governments and Rural Oregon citizens as envisioned by our Governor.

Thank you.


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