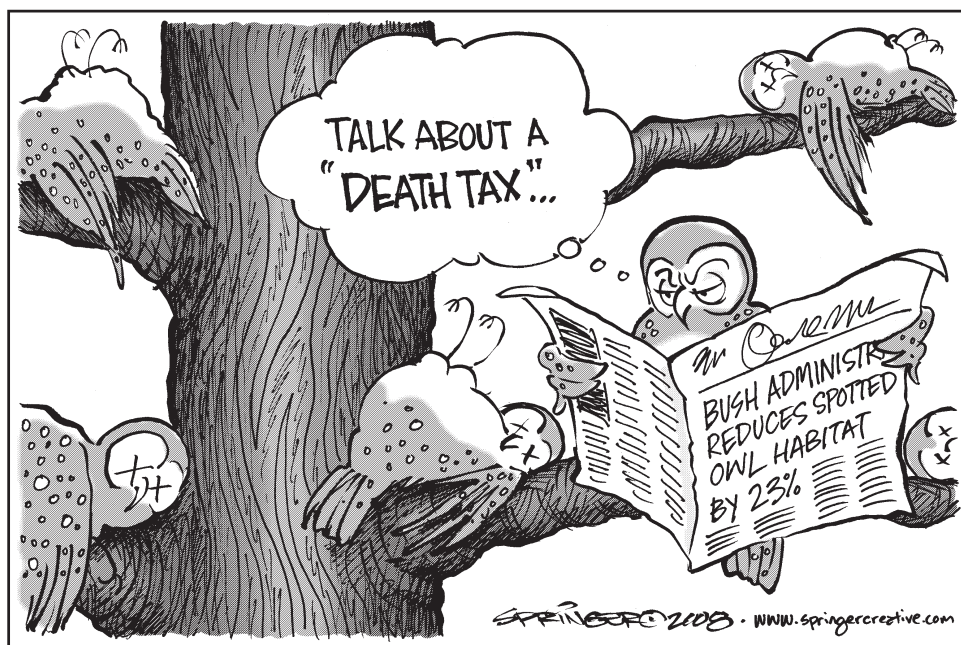


Timber wars part deux: Administration rewrites landmark 1994 forest compromise

By *Natalie Henry Bennon*

You may remember it or you may not, but in the early 1990s, there was a timber war in the Pacific Northwest. The region was at the center of domestic news and policy debates when the northern spotted owl was listed as threatened and logging operations on federal forests in the Northwest slowed significantly after decades of overcutting. The debate was finally suspended in 1994 when the Clinton Administration unveiled the Northwest Forest Plan, which was meant to balance timber harvests with environmental concerns like outdoor recreation, fish, wildlife, and clean water.



Courtesy of Springer Creative

That was 22 years ago. Now, Pandora's box is being opened again as the Forest Service begins revising the Northwest Forest Plan. While we sincerely hope this next round does not result in any warring, Pacific Rivers is concerned about the future of the Northwest Forest Plan – a particularly the protections in the plan for clean water and healthy rivers.

Take me back to 1994

The spotted owl was protected as a threatened species in 1990 under the federal Endangered Species Act years. By 1994, owl-related bumper stickers were common in the Northwest, saying things like, "Save a logger. Eat an owl." And one of my favorites, "No toilet paper. Wipe your ass with a spotted owl." On the flip side, there were bumper stickers that said, "Save an owl. Educate a logger." Radical environmentalists were camping out in trees. Moderate environmentalists

were talking to the administration and members of Congress. President Clinton came himself to the Oregon Convention Center, and a parade of logging trucks drove past.

The Northwest Forest Plan was unveiled in 1994 as the Clinton administration's compromise between timber and the environment. Part of the plan included the Aquatic Conservation Strategy, thanks in large part to Pacific Rivers' staff and supporters, who realized that the forest plan couldn't be just about protecting owls. It also had to protect clean water and aquatic habitat, particularly for salmon.

The Northwest Forest Plan covers 24 million acres of federal forest in northern California, Oregon and Washington. It set up a system for protecting remaining old-growth forests – which many species

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Protect the Best Restore the Rest

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Timber wars part deux Continued from page 1

rely on – and other forests that were old enough that soon they would have old-growth features, such as trees wide enough for owl and marbled murrelet nests, and tall enough to shade streams for fish. The aquatic portion of the plan – the Aquatic Conservation Strategy – protects key watersheds and requires a buffer of standing trees along rivers and streams. It includes strategies for watershed restoration, monitoring, and analysis. The Aquatic Conservation Strategy is the first and best example in the nation of an ecologically based approach to managing watersheds and streamside forests on federal lands.

The Northwest Forest Plan was supposed to stay in place for 100 years. However, administrative forest plans must be reviewed every 10-20 years. So now, in 2016, Pacific Rivers welcomes a robust debate about the Northwest Forest Plan and its Aquatic Conservation Strategy.

Keep it Whole

The Northwest Forest Plan could be entirely dismantled in this upcoming review – and that would be a travesty. If each forest develops separate plans piece by piece, it would be the death of the Northwest Forest Plan. Pacific Rivers is advocating that the Northwest Forest Plan stay in place as one guiding, regional document.

Protect our water

Moreover, if the special interests pushing for increased timber harvests get their way, they will open up the riparian reserves to more logging. There is no other place to cut. Spotted owl habitat is, by law, off limits. That leaves the strips of trees along our rivers and streams very vulnerable to more logging.

We know the Aquatic Conservation Strategy is on the chopping block. We saw it over the last three years when industry pushed to increase logging on the Bureau of Land Management's 2.5 million acres of forests in western Oregon (so-called O&C Lands). Industry proposed reducing streamside tree buffers within the riparian reserves by more than half, and completely eliminating key watersheds and watershed analysis. The Forest Service could follow suit, and our goal is to ensure the Aquatic Conservation Strategy is maintained.

Stay tuned, as we plan to have ways for our supporters to get involved and make their voices heard on this important issue to Northwest rivers and wildlife.



It sounds good. But what does it mean?

By John Kober and Natalie Henry Bennon

At Pacific Rivers, forestry reform means changing laws and regulations around forestry AND changing the culture of forestlands management.

As readers of this newsletter and members of Pacific Rivers know, Oregon's rules on private forestlands are not protecting people, water, or wildlife. Oregon allows aerial spraying of very toxic chemicals, clearcutting on steep slopes that often slide into rivers and streams, and logging right through small streams.

We can do better. In California and Washington, the forest products industry still operates profitably under rules that better protect human and environmental health.

So first, we need to reform the Oregon Forest Practices Act – the law governing logging on private forestlands.

Second, we need to incentivize good practices so the forest products industry remains robust in Oregon and continues to contribute to the economy – but fairly and in ways that reflect the value of clean water and healthy forests.

Pacific Northwest forests are one of the Earth's most significant carbon sinks. There is value in this.

Our forests provide clean air. There is value in this.

Our forests filter and store clean water for drinking, and for fish and wildlife. There is value in this.

While there is value in all of these things, so far, forestland owners do not get paid for carbon storage, clean air, or clean water. They get paid for sawlogs.

What if we paid them for carbon storage, clean air, and clean water? What if they could harvest timber and still



Photo by Francis Eatherington

Coquille forest

allow the forests to store carbon and provide clean air and water?

Pacific Rivers is working to secure funding for a new project that will do just that. Working with Ecotrust, Salmon-Safe, Northwest Natural Resource Group, and Hyla Woods, we are working to develop a Salmon-Safe layer for Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification.

FSC certification is a well-established market label that tells consumers the lumber they are buying came from timberlands that were managed under verifiable standards that protect environmental health. Salmon-Safe is a non-profit started by Pacific Rivers that develops certification standards for farms and more to tell consumers these products were grown in a way that did not harm salmon. By creating a Salmon-Safe overlay for FSC wood, we can help timber companies get paid for more than just sawlogs. We can incentivize clean air, clean water, and carbon storage.

Your employer can support Pacific Rivers!

The effects of climate change are growing, putting stress on the land, water, food, energy and other resources people and wildlife need to thrive. But Oregonians can do more to protect our way of life. Pacific Rivers has partnered with EarthShare Oregon to make that happen.

Does your workplace offer EarthShare? Find out. (<http://earthshare-oregon.org/campaigns/workplace-partners>)

If not, talk to your boss or human resources personnel about offering EarthShare. Meghan Humphreys from EarthShare Oregon will meet with your employer to discuss the benefits of a partnership, and get started.

To learn more about bringing EarthShare to your workplace, contact Meghan at 503-223-9015 or meghan@earthshare-oregon.org.

2015 was a banner year for Pacific Rivers

By Natalie Henry Bennon

Evolution was our word of year at Pacific Rivers.

In 2015, we embarked on a rebranding that led to a new logo, a name change (we dropped Council from our name) and a brand new shiny website! We also hired a communications director (me, Natalie) to maintain the website, among other things. As we continue to increase our investment in storytelling, especially via film, we are excited the website can include video and is easy to update.

We also released a new film, *Behind the Emerald Curtain*, to launch our campaign to modernize rules on private industrial timberlands in Oregon. Oregon is behind its neighbors in California, Oregon and Washington. We need rules to protect small streams and water quality; prevent landslides; and ban aerial spraying of toxic herbicides. The 30-minute film is our longest yet, has received four awards, and was accepted into the national Wild & Scenic Film Festival in Nevada City, Calif. Kudos to our filmmaker Shane Anderson for doing an incredible job, and many thanks to everyone who has come to see it or hosted a screening. We have more screenings on the way, and will release a shorter version online in 2016. See the preview at pacificrivers.org.

In 2015, we worked with Senator Ron Wyden to introduce the Frank Moore Wild Steelhead Sanctuary in the Steamboat Creek watershed of the North Umpqua Basin east of Roseburg, Oregon. We also completed another year of fish monitoring on Canton Creek, a tributary to Steamboat Creek. Canton Creek is an extremely productive stream for salmon and cutthroat trout, and for four years, stream ecologist Charley Dewberry has led a group of students and volunteers to don wetsuits, get in the river, and count young fish.

One of the more tedious jobs we did – but somebody's got to do it – was analyze the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's proposal for changing management of certain federal forests in Oregon. The so-called the Oregon & California Railroad lands make up 2.5 million acres in all but one county in western Oregon. There is pressure to increase timber harvest, and Pacific Rivers and partners submitted comments asking the Bureau to fully consider the harm to water from more cutting. After all, 1.8 million Oregonians get their drinking water from



Pacific Rivers' staff, left to right: Natalie Henry Bennon, John Kober, Kalei Augustine and Greg Haller.

streams that flow through O&C lands, and O&C watersheds support important populations of fish and wildlife.

And we moved the ball forward toward modernizing the 50-year-old Columbia River Treaty between the U.S. and Canada to include ecosystem function – for the fish, wildlife, and people facing a changing climate.

We're thrilled with our work in 2015, our evolution, and our progress in raising awareness about watershed issues in the Northwest while building our base of activists and supporters. In 2016, we will continue to advocate for clean water and healthy rivers through our campaigns to:

- Clean up logging on private timberlands in Oregon by reforming the Oregon Forest Practices Act.
- Protect rivers and water on the 24 million acres of federal forest in California, Oregon, and Washington by encouraging the administration to not dismantle the Northwest Forest Plan or its very successful Aquatic Conservation Strategy.
- Modernize the Columbia River Treaty with Canada and add ecosystem function as a key element.
- Advocate for Wild & Scenic River designations as the founders of the Montanans for Healthy Rivers coalition.
- Build support for protecting rivers and water on Oregon's state forests.

Thank you for joining us on the journey, and here's to clean water and healthy rivers in 2016!

Board of Forestry fails to protect fish, water quality

By *Natalie Henry Bennon*

The Oregon Board of Forestry adopted new rules in November that fail to protect fish or water quality from the harmful practices happening along small streams throughout Oregon private forestlands.

The Board adopted to increase tree buffers to 60 feet on small fish-bearing streams and 80 on medium fish-bearing streams.

- This is far short of the 100 to 120 feet that most scientists, including those from state and federal agencies, say is needed to protect salmon, steelhead and bull trout swimming in streams flowing through private timberlands.
- The new buffers still fail to meet state water quality standards, and may still fail to meet federal water quality standards.
- The board excluded the entire Siskiyou region from the rule, despite the fact that some streams there are not meeting water quality standards. The Siskiyou is a slightly drier ecosystem in southwest with very diverse fish and wildlife ecosystems.

“After a decade of analysis and deliberation, the Oregon Board of Forestry chose to adopt rules based on political



Photo by Shane Anderson, North Fork Studios

A small stream with no fish and no tree buffers.

expediency rather than science. These new buffer requirements will not provide the shade that science and the law say is necessary to keep streams cold for salmon, steelhead and bull trout,” said Greg Haller, conservation director for Pacific Rivers.

Moreover, the rule only applies to fish-bearing streams. The bulk of our watersheds are made up of small streams with no fish – so this rule only applies to a very small fraction of the watershed. There are zero buffers of trees in most streams in Oregon’s watersheds, meaning sediment in the water and no shade. This harms the fish, wildlife, and people that all rely on clean, cool water.

Welcome to the Board Jon Kurtz

By *Natalie Henry Bennon*

Jon Kurtz first became an environmentalist when he returned to Oregon in the early 1970s. He began fly-fishing for steelhead on the North Umpqua River with luminaries like Frank Moore, Jim Van Loan, and the Christensen family. These folks mentored him in fishing and environmental activism.

Soon after, he saw the 1958 film *Pass Creek* and was struck by the wanton destruction of the North Umpqua basin, especially in the upper watershed. Fish and wildlife habitat was being ruined. Water quality was suffering. Anadromous fish runs were declining due to catastrophic logging activities.

“All of that only enhanced my desire to protect rivers,” Kurtz said.

Soon after, turbines were installed in Winchester Dam on the North Umpqua. “When they began turning

salmon and steelhead smolt into cat food, I earnestly began being an advocate,” Kurtz said.

Kurtz joined the North Umpqua Foundation and eventually Pacific Rivers as well. As a new board member, Kurtz hopes to continue his journey of being a river advocate and helping protect and restore rivers, habitat, fisheries, and water quality.

FAVORITE RIVERS: North Umpqua, Deschutes, Sustut (B.C.), and whatever river he just fished.

“It seems like where I travel, I fish. Whether in Florida or Montana, Central or South America, the last place I was on the water is my new favorite,” Kurtz said.



Behind the Emerald Curtain shown at California's Wild & Scenic Film Festival



Behind the Emerald Curtain was accepted into the prestigious Wild & Scenic Film Festival in California this year, and was screened there in January to approximately 250 people. It also won a silver from the Oregon Film Awards and best of festival from the International Climate Change Film Festival.



If you haven't seen the film yet, we will release a 10-minute online version later this year. We are also ordering DVDs, and will soon make the full 30-minute film available for purchase via our website. Finally, we offer a free screening package to anyone willing to host a public screening. Contact info@pacificrivers.org or call 503-228-3555 x202.

We have a petition on www.change.org that anyone can sign, asking Oregon Governor Kate Brown and the Oregon Board of Forestry to support comprehensive reform on Oregon's private forestlands. So far, we have about 223 comments, but we need many more.

Have you signed our petition? Go to our homepage or find it on the [change.org](http://www.change.org) website: <https://www.change.org/p/oregon-governor-kate-brown-keep-water-clean-and-rivers-healthy-demand-responsible-logging-in-oregon>

Host a screening of Behind the Emerald Curtain

If you'd like to host a public screening of *Behind the Emerald Curtain*, contact us at info@pacificrivers.org or call 503-228-3555 x202.

What people are saying about our petition to reform private logging practices in Oregon:

"I remember when there were big trees all over Oregon. We need to protect what's left of our timber and water."

Dawn, Eugene, OR

"I remember when places like Opal Creek were the norm."

Jean, Vancouver, WA

"I'm signing because I need clean water and natural forests provide that."

Robin, Roseburg, OR

"This rape of our forests has gone on far too long, as has the damage to the health of people and animals, including pets and livestock. The law needs revision – NOW!"

Dr. John Gardiner, Cave Junction, OR

"I am a bike tour guide who makes most of her income taking tourists from around the world through the forested roads of the Columbia River Gorge. I tell the story every day I go of the timber barons who took so much lumber off of Larch Mountain that it would, in board feet, stretch 85% of the way to the moon; I tell them how the whole Bridal Veil Logging Company went up in smoke in 1937 because of poor management of the forest. I tell them that the beautiful lichen on Latourell Falls is candelaris. I tell them that the lichen's color comes from clearcuts beyond our view.

One day as I was riding, a tree fell, only 100 feet or so away from where I was about to ride. It hit a car and killed a man. Inside the tree, termites had bored pathways that destroyed the tree from the inside out.

Our forests are alive in so many ways. They keep us alive and they can also kill us. They're organisms of wonder and power. We're not listening to them. We haven't been listening to them for hundreds of years.

It's time to start listening."

Sarah Gilbert, Portland, OR

Pacific Rivers Submits Comments on Coho Recovery Plan

By Greg Haller and Heather Reese

This past December, Pacific Rivers submitted comments to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) proposed Endangered Species Act (ESA) Recovery Plan for Oregon Coast Coho Salmon. Coho are listed as threatened under the federal ESA.

Recovery Plans are required under the ESA and must incorporate, at a minimum:

1. a description of the actions necessary to promote recovery;
2. measurable criteria that when met would result in the removal of the species from the ESA list; and
3. an estimate of the time and cost to achieve the plan's goals.

Oregon's Coho populations have experienced dramatic declines from historic levels, due in large part to urbanization, deforestation, and poor water quality. The remaining Coho habitat provides an insufficient buffer against the impacts of climate change or years of poor ocean conditions. To protect the species from further decline and recover the species, there must be a net increase in high-quality habitat.

The draft recovery plan acknowledges the threats posed to Coho habitat by forestry and agricultural practices that destabilize slopes, degrade riparian zones, and pollute rivers. Pacific Rivers contends – and NMFS agrees – that the Oregon Forest Practices Act allows unsound and destructive timber harvest methods on private lands and is a primary factor in the destruction of Coho habitat. For example, despite the fact that studies have repeatedly shown that salmon and trout need forested stream-side buffers of at least 100 feet to keep streams cool, the Oregon Board of Forestry recently opted for political



expediency over the needs of fish, and adopted new rules that fall short of the buffers that fish need.

The actions identified in the draft plan will cost an estimated \$55-110 million over the next five years, which is on top of the already \$200 million spent since Coho were listed.

We noted the importance of restoring beaver populations as a critical element of Coho recovery. The dams that beavers build create excellent rearing habitat for juvenile fish – slowing swift water, trapping sediment, and providing food and cover. Beaver populations are a fraction of their historic numbers throughout the range of Coho, so it is unsurprising Coho populations are in trouble.

While voluntary or incentive-based restoration efforts by private landowners can be effective, it is essential that agencies enforce existing regulations, crack down on bad actors, and update policies as needed to improve watershed health. Coho populations remain threatened by critical habitat loss and degradation. Until better and more abundant habitat is available to reverse the coho decline, the federal Endangered Species Act is a vital tool in protecting Oregon's threatened coho populations.

A special thanks to our supporting foundations

Thank you to the following foundations for helping us toward a future of healthy rivers and clean water! If you want to join the effort to create a livable future for all, please donate!

Visit: www.pacificrivers.org/donate

Wilburforce Foundation
Meyer Memorial Trust
North Umpqua Foundation
Brainerd Foundation
Autzen Foundation
Burning Foundation
Flyfishers Foundation
NW Fund for Environment

Jubitz Family Foundation
Norcross Wildlife Foundation
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Fanwood
Anonymous
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Nearly 300 viewers applaud *Behind the Emerald Curtain* at Wild Rivers Night

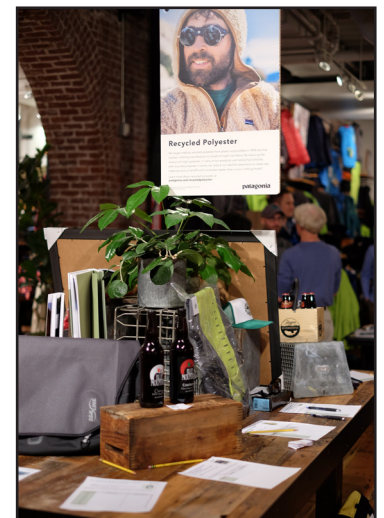
By Heather Reese

Pacific Rivers was thrilled to once again take part in Wild Rivers Night in Portland, Oregon on January 7, 2016. The event was a spectacular success, drawing nearly 300 river lovers to celebrate and support Oregon's beautiful watersheds. The lively crowd had the opportunity to chat with and support participating river organizations, while enjoying tasty brews and pizza. The evening culminated with screenings of several fascinating shorts on river issues, including Pacific Rivers' *Behind the Emerald Curtain*, directed by Shane Anderson, which reveals the destruction happening throughout many private timberlands in Oregon due to weak regulations and lack of awareness.

Pacific Rivers thanks Patagonia for hosting the event, all of the partner groups who participated and volunteers Heidi Dwyer, Lorraine Fox, Diane Dulken, and Heather Reese for helping table at the event.

So far, Pacific Rivers has had nearly 1,000 people view the film, and more than 6,000 view the preview online. We are building momentum for our campaign to clean up private timberlands logging in Oregon by reforming

the Oregon Forest Practices Act. Check our website, www.pacificrivers.org, for upcoming screenings. If you are outside of Oregon, we will release the full film to a broader audience later this year. Stay tuned via the newsletter, email, or Facebook to find out how you can get your own copy or host a public screening.



Above: Heather Reese, Kalei Augustine and Heidi Dwyer.
At left, silent auction table.