



The Watershed

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Changes to plan would triple Sierra logging

The U.S. Forest Service is seeking extensive changes to a management plan for the Sierra Nevada. These changes would greatly intensify logging in the area.

Under the proposed changes to the plan, called the Sierra Nevada Framework, protection for old-growth forest and restrictions on livestock grazing would be severely weakened. In addition, current levels of commercial logging would nearly triple, threatening endangered species habitat and watersheds throughout the region.

The proposed changes, which would apply across 11.5 million acres of national forests

in the region, had been pending for a period of public comment, which closed Sept. 12. The Forest Service received at least 36,000 comments in favor of keeping the existing Framework in place. Between March and September, Forests Forever received more than 8,000 commitments from supporters to write, fax or call the Forest Service and U.S. Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer opposing the changes.

Forests Forever also has provided research related to the Framework to the Sierra Nevada Forest Protection

see "Framework," p. 9 col. 1



Inyo National Forest

Gerald and Buff Corsi © California Academy of Sciences

Victory! Court tosses flawed Jackson plan

Forests Forever recently won a major victory in its two-year battle to end large-scale logging of Jackson State Forest.

On Aug. 5 the Mendocino County Superior Court threw out the management plan and accompanying environmental report for Jackson Demonstration State Forest. Forests Forever Foundation and ally The Campaign to Restore Jackson State Redwood Forest last fall had sued the California Department of Forestry (CDF)

over the documents. The two groups charged that the environmental report violated basic requirements of law.

Specifically, Judge Richard Henderson said the report contained three flaws:

- The state Board of Forestry, not the forestry department, should have been the agency to certify the environmental report.
- The report did not contain adequate consideration of the environmen-

tal setting of the forest, as required by law. And most significantly,

- The report did not adequately evaluate the cumulative environmental impacts of the management plan's outlined timber operations.

Henderson ruled that the report must

see "Jackson," p. 12 col. 1

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Environmentalists wary of Schwarzenegger; Actor's pro-green appearance may not last

Just after the recall election I asked a new acquaintance, a mature man who was worldly and apparently well-educated, whether he had any concerns about the upcoming Arnold Schwarzenegger governorship.

He thought for a moment then looked up at me anxiously. "Yes," he said. "Does this mean there won't be any more 'Terminator' movies?"

Levity aside, though, by Nov. 16 the muscular movie actor who has never held elective office will take the helm of the government of the world's sixth-largest economy. Along with my movie-going friend some environmentalists are biting their nails.

Some observers have noted that Schwarzenegger has a fairly large list of environmental campaign promises, unusual for a Republican. Some speculate that he may be more astute at reading the California electorate's pro-environment leanings than his GOP predecessors.

There is reason to believe this is wishful thinking.

Forests Forever looks forward to working with the new governor in accomplishing everything we can in the furtherance of responsible forest management. It is prudent, however, for us to proceed with as few illusions as possible.

As many readers of this column are aware, recent history has shown that Republicans tend to be more hostile to environmental safeguards than Democrats.

The national League of Conservation Voters in 2002 gave Republicans in Congress, out of possible score of 100, a 13 in the Senate and 17 in the House of Representatives. Democrats scored 72 in the Senate and 79 in the House.

These numbers are typical at the state level and illustrate a longstanding difference between the two major political parties.

Also important regarding forestry reform as the Schwarzenegger term

approaches is that, as with most Republicans, a central bloc of his most-influential support is the business community. Further, to gain the support of his party's most-conservative state leaders Schwarzenegger reportedly made a deal with them-- they would overlook his moderate social positions in exchange for his running a campaign that would attract voters from outside the party's hard-core ranks (San Francisco Chronicle, Oct. 9).

"Over the course of (Schwarzenegger's) term it is unlikely he will stray very far from his bedrock supporters' agenda."

Over the course of his term it is likely these IOUs will be called in, and unlikely he will stray very far from his bedrock supporters' agenda. As Christopher Matthews points out in his acclaimed book "Hardball," loyalty is everything in politics: You are expected to "dance with the one that brung ya."

On forest issues in particular we were pleasantly surprised to see Schwarzenegger's position in favor of the current Sierra Nevada Framework. See related story, page one.

In a seven-page pre-election campaign statement on his environmental positions, Schwarzenegger says, "As Governor I will direct all relevant state agencies to comply fully with the Framework and call on the federal government to honor its pledge to abide by the policies set forth in this unprecedented document."

Sounds good, but it does not exactly say that he will oppose the weakening changes to the Framework, now being

pushed by the Bush Administration.

There have always been a few Republican politicians who had decent environmental records. There is even an emerging organization called REP America that seeks to restore environmental protection as a fundamental element in the GOP's vision for the country. But for now "green Republican" remains mostly an oxymoron.

Now in Democrat Gray Davis' case conservationists had high hopes but got a lot less than they bargained for. Across the spectrum of environmental issues forestry reform was the one on which Davis was most harshly criticized.

On Oct. 12 Davis signed the best forestry bill of his term, which will allow regional water quality control boards to veto excessively polluting logging plans. But this happened after Davis had lost the recall election-- after timber industry PACs could no longer punish him.

None of this changes the fact that Republicans almost always are worse environmentalists than Democrats.

As under past moderate Republicans, it is likely we will see Schwarzenegger make environmentally retrograde appointments to the judiciary and to agencies such as the board of forestry. Much harm can be done, as well, with unfriendly budgets and expenditure-item vetoes, as well as with regulatory "streamlining" efforts.

We doubt that Arnold would want a poor showing in the eyes of his business and industry backers to become a second-term eliminator.

It's our job to make it politically costlier for him to allow the timber industry to have its way with the state's forests.

— Paul Hughes



"Healthy Forests" would curb public input, axe key federal environmental regulations

A bill that would implement President Bush's ill-named "Healthy Forests" initiative is edging its way closer to a U.S. Senate vote.

The legislation, the "Healthy Forests

Just as concerning to environmentalists, the bill would hobble public input regarding logging projects.

"The most important thing for citizen activists to know is that 1904 limits their

Bills backing the initiative were introduced in the House and Senate during the 2002 legislative session but were not voted on.

Forests Forever's phone canvass has sent out several email and printed alerts on the initiative since its introduction, encouraging its contributors to contact their legislators in opposition to the plan.

Late in September of this year, several Senate Republicans and Democrats, including California Sen. Dianne Feinstein, a Democrat, cut a deal on a new version of H.R. 1904.

Dix said the new version looked almost exactly like the original bill. The only substantive change was the addition of very weak language regarding old-growth protection, she said.

"It's not that great of a deal," Dix said. "It still cuts out the public and it doesn't do anything to protect communities."

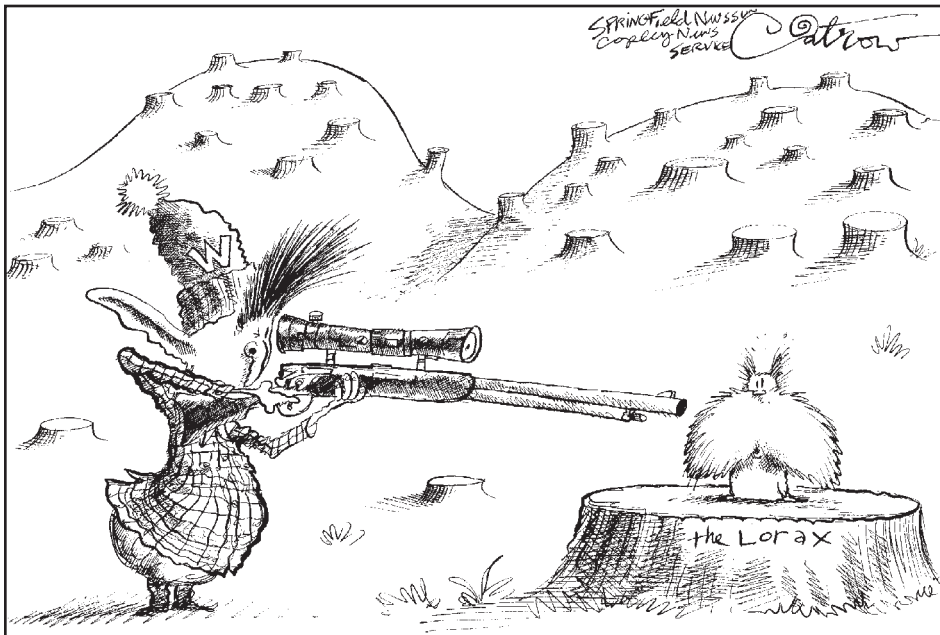
While its stated purpose is fire protection, H.R. 1904 does not focus thinning projects near homes or communities. Instead it allows fuels-reduction projects that include logging into remote, and even roadless, forestlands.

As an alternative to H.R. 1904 Sens. Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Patrick Leahy (D-VT) introduced their own wildfire legislation that does focus fuels reduction near populated areas. The bill, "Forestry and Community Assistance Act," or S.B. 1453, leaves intact the existing public appeals process for projects on federal forestlands.

Dix was clear on how Feinstein could best channel her energy.

"It seems to me that it would be better for Sen. Feinstein to work with her colleague from California and to craft an alternative that could be supported by the majority of the Senate rather than backing the Administration's proposal," she said.

— Robert Sombrio



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Restoration Act," or H.R. 1904, would suspend environmental laws in order to expedite logging across federal forestlands. The U.S. House of Representatives passed the bill in May. The legislation passed out of the Senate Agriculture Committee July 24 and at press time was headed for a vote on the Senate floor.

H.R. 1904 would abolish certain National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements for projects the U.S. Forest Service deems necessary for reducing the threat of wildfire.

In addition, the bill would allow timber companies to log large trees on federal forests—including old-growth trees—as payment for removing flammable smaller trees and brush.

rights to even interact with the federal land management agencies in decisions affecting hazardous-fuels-reduction projects anywhere on national forests and Bureau of Land Management lands," said Lisa Dix

TAKE ACTION:

At press time H.R. 1904 has not been voted on and Forests Forever is recommending that people write letters to the editor of their local newspaper opposing the measure. Check your local paper's website for information on how to send letters via email, fax or regular mail. For updated information on the bill's progress and sample letters to the editor, visit:

www.forestsforever.org/bushhealthyforests.html

of the American Lands Alliance in Washington, D.C.

President Bush first introduced "Healthy Forests" in August of last year.

Forests Forever's Jackson Forest campaign garners coverage in L.A. Times, other venues

Forests Forever took an already-successful media campaign up another notch in recent months, winning coverage from the Los Angeles Times as well as an exclusive TV interview.

The L.A. Times piece, "Activists decry logging of scenic state forest," by staff writer Evan Halper, ran May 3. The article included a photo from a protest Forests Forever staged with ally The Campaign to Restore Jackson State Redwood Forest at California Department of Forestry offices in Willits. A second photo featured Jackson activist Bill Heil. The article detailed the groups' work to restore the forest to old-growth-like conditions.

The L.A. Times coverage resulted largely from research by Forests Forever into private landowners receiving grant money from Jackson logging revenue. One of these recipients was the Weesha Country Club in San Bernadino County, a favored spot for advertisers to shoot commercials for trucks and all-terrain vehicles. Another was the Lake Arrowhead Homeowners Assn., a private community in the San Bernadino Mountains that owns and maintains the lake exclusively for members and guests.

On July 11 Forests Forever Executive Director Paul Hughes was interviewed on "North Bay Insider," a morning news program on Santa Rosa's KFTY-TV Channel 50.

Reporters Curtiss Kim and Scott Craig interviewed Hughes live for five minutes on Jackson and five more minutes on President Bush's ill-named "Healthy Forests" initiative. Hughes also

explained Forests Forever's position on topics such as sustainable logging (see related story, page 6) and the decline of the Mendocino County timber industry.

In addition to the L.A. Times and KFTY hits, Forests Forever

B

Los Angeles Times

CALIFORNIA

Activists Decry Logging of Scenic State Forest

Short-term financial gain is driving a policy that sacrifices a precious resource, critics say.

By EVAN HALPER
Times Staff Writer

FORT BRAGG, Calif. — For years, a significant chunk of California's budget for forest restoration and protection has hinged on the logging of thousands of century-old redwoods in a state forest near the Mendocino coast.

To the chagrin of environmentalists, the scenic 50,000-acre Jackson Demonstration State Forest has been a cash cow, with woods full of 80- to 120-year-old trees generating as much as \$12 million annually.

One of the few remaining public redwood forests, Jackson was established more than 50 years ago as a place for the state to experiment with sustainable forestry. The concept was to promote more environmentally friendly harvesting practices while selling felled trees to raise money for government coffers.

Two years ago the logging was stopped when environmental groups successfully argued in court that the state's management plan failed to fully account for the effects of logging on water quality and wildlife.

But the state has since updated its management plan and last month accepted a \$3.4-million bid that will allow Schmidbauer Lumber Co. of Eureka to begin logging more than 400 acres in the next several weeks.

"This is a good deal for Californians," said Louis Blumberg, spokesman for the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. "Especially in this time of fiscal problems."

The money from logging goes to a variety of programs; the biggest amount pays for the maintenance of state forests and fire-fighting. But other money goes to pay private landowners — among them rural resorts and country clubs — to plant lesser

[See Forest, Page B4]

[Forest, from Page B1] trees to mitigate erosion and to thin the woods on their own land.

The latter program is viewed dubiously by local activists and major environmental groups.

"We are cutting down big redwoods in one place to plant tiny trees with low survival rates in another," said Paul Hughes, executive director of Forests Forever, a San Francisco-based environmental group. "It makes no sense."

By logging redwoods, activists say, the state is sacrificing a precious scenic resource to squeeze out as much money as possible during lean budget times.

With a different forest management, "You can bring back these 100-year-old redwoods at Jackson to something approaching ancient forests," Hughes said.



SIGN OF DISCONTENT: Margaret Calby takes part in protest before bids are taken at a timber sale at the Jackson forest.

in a lengthy article in the June issue of California Journal, a magazine for Press-Democrat and Willits News. Forests Forever plans to continue



The state forestry department wants it both ways — a beautiful redwood forest that produces millions of dollars of timber. Its scientists have tested Jackson State Demonstration Forest purchased it 56 years ago. Now, pro out of the tree-cutting business.

By Hank Sims

Back in April the North Coast Department protected the new acquisition forest, the crown jewel authorities were prepared private lumber companies were co Mendocino County resident and a Redwood Forest, a local industry Department of Forestry's manager



KFTY TV-50 reporters Scott Craig and Curtiss Kim interview Forests Forever Executive Director Paul Hughes.

Sacramento insiders.

Also in June, San Francisco Magazine's "Think Green" issue listed Forests Forever's work to stop logging at Jackson State Forest under the heading "Pick your fight" as one of five local environmental issues to "get into."

Forests Forever's lawsuit victory (see related article, page 1) resulted in coverage from the Associated Press, Santa Rosa

increasing its campaigns' visibility in the media over the coming months. Stay tuned for headlines on our research on topics related to the Sierra Nevada Framework (see story, page 1).

- A.S.

Shifting to sustainable forestry:

Logging's emphasis can move beyond mere profits— “We're only limited by what we think we can't do”

Forest-protection groups, David to the timber industry's Goliath, constantly scramble to stop logging from damaging—and even destroying—the Earth's dwindling forests.

Although inarguably necessary, the

Environmental advocates and scientists generally agree, however, that a sustainable forestry operation is one in which trees are removed at a slower rate than they grow back.

Recognized sustainable forestry expert Hans Burkhardt of Willits says that this rate of removal in a year should be no more than 2 percent of the forest's annual total wood volume. This percentage has become widely accepted in forestry activist circles.

When trees are removed at a faster rate than 2 percent of the inventory (or “POI 2”), it doesn't just reduce the number of trees in the forest, Burkhardt said in an interview with Forests Forever. It also depletes the nutrients in the soil, slowing the growth of the trees that remain.

If the harvest rate exceeds the 2 percent of inventory, Burkhardt says, not only will the forest decline ecologically, but also the companies economically dependent on that forest will collapse.

Burkhardt, who has primarily studied forests in Mendocino County, points to the private Willits Woods timber holding as a

year and supplying about 60 permanent jobs for the people of Willits.

“They didn't care about what would follow because they knew they would leave and sell it,” Burkhardt said.

Chris Maser, a former U.S. Bureau of Land Management forester and a respected sustainable forestry consultant, says that the pursuit of economic gain has taken priority over scientific understanding of the forests' limits.

“We can have a sustainable forest industry to produce wood products for people, but only if we redesign industry to operate, in fact, within the sustainable limits set by the forest, not by people,” Maser writes in “The Redesigned Forest” (R. & E. Miles, 1988).

For forestry to be truly sustainable, Maser says, humans must manage not just trees, but processes. Forests left untouched increase in their diversity, complexity and stability over time, Maser says.

“We are not now headed toward sustainable forestry because we are training plantation managers, not foresters,” Maser writes. “A forester manages a forest. We are liquidating our forests and replacing them with short-rotation plantations.”

Sustainable forests are ones managed for multiple uses— not just timber production, said the late Gordon Robinson, a pre-eminent forester who served for over a decade as the chief forestry spokesman for the Sierra Club. These uses include forests' less-quantifiable values: the habitat they provide, for example, and their inherent beauty.

Robinson identified five characteristics of his “multiple-use forestry.” The first is the basic one mentioned above: harvesting trees at a slower rate than they grow back.

The others include:

- Long cutting cycles. This means allowing trees to reach maturity—generally 100 to 200 years—



photo © Mark and Audrey Gibson

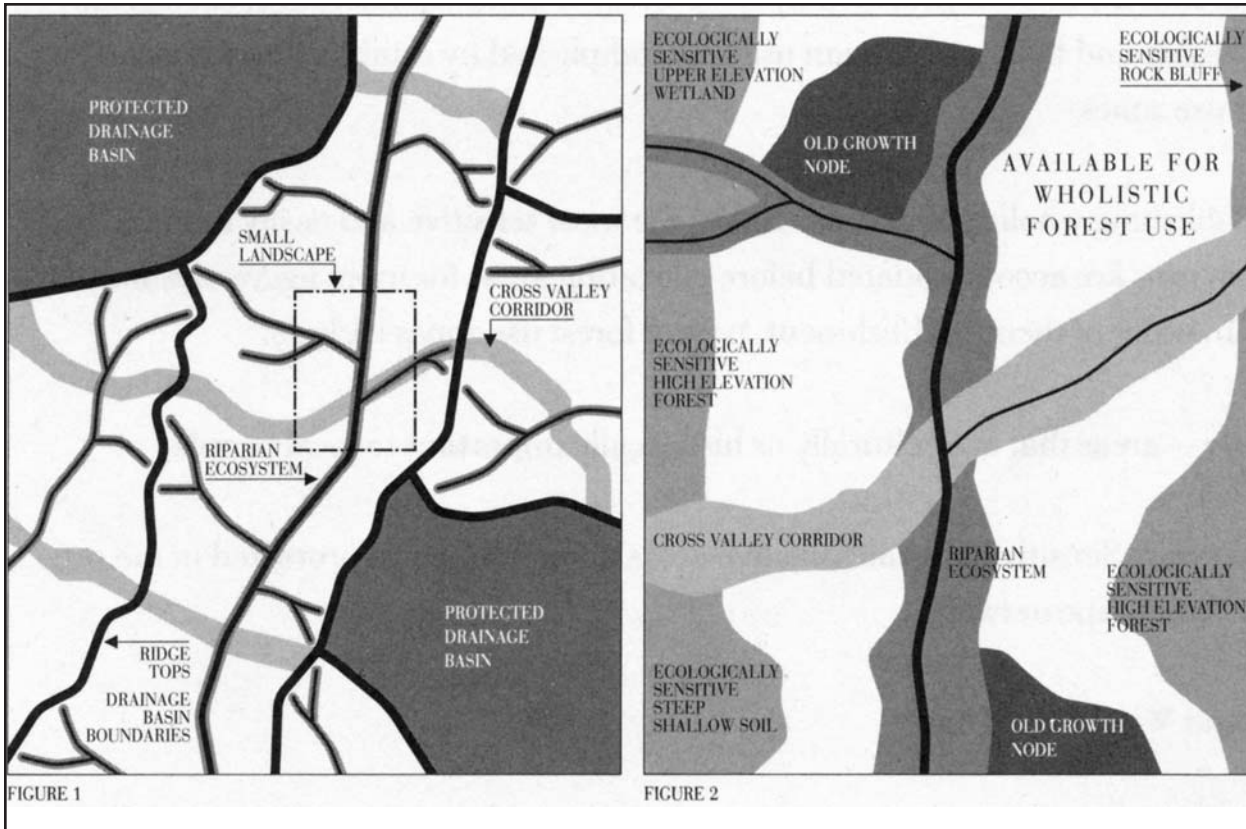
attention focused on stopping bad projects has tended to obscure the fact that not all logging must be greatly harmful. It is possible to log in ways that allow forests to sustain themselves in perpetuity.

Like many activist organizations, Forests Forever does not categorically oppose all logging. Says the group's Executive Director Paul Hughes: “We have always favored logging done in an environmentally sensitive manner. And even though there is a growing number of examples out there of environmentally acceptable logging, it is still happening on only a tiny fraction of the total acreage being logged.”

Definitions of sustainable logging vary.

example. The land, which was later bought by R. & J. Lumber Company, was logged down to about 2 percent of its original timber volume, then auctioned off in 1988. If it had been managed sustainably, Burkhardt says, the land still could be producing an annual volume of high-quality timber worth \$5 million per

For forestry to be truly sustainable, Maser says, humans must manage not just trees, but processes.



© Foundation for Deep Ecology

species.

- Taking extreme precautions to protect the soil.

Although a certain level of expertise is needed to manage a forest well, Robinson said, you don't have to be a professional forester to recognize bad forestry. If logging looks bad, he said, it is. When forestry is done sustainably, on the other hand, the forest retains its beauty.

Seth Zuckerman, author of "Saving our Ancient Forests"

(Living Planet Press, 1991), emphasizes the importance of mimicking natural processes when logging. Practitioners of sustainable forestry realize that forests thrive on "messiness," including downed logs, snags (standing dead trees), uneven tree heights, Zuckerman says. Logging should be done in a way that mirrors how trees would die off naturally in the forest, he says.

"There's always mortality in the forest," Zuckerman said in an interview with Forests Forever. While trees often die off individually or in small clusters, he says, "It's way less common that an entire hillside will be denuded."

Zuckerman points to 500-acre Arcata Community Forest in Humboldt County as a working example of sustainable forestry. The citizens of Arcata passed a law in 1979 with the intention of developing an ecologically sensitive long-term management program for the forest.

"They tend to take small groups of trees of a quarter to half an acre, mimicking what a windstorm could do in the forest," Zuckerman said of the forest's managers.

Soquel Demonstration State Forest in Santa Cruz County, which uses horse log-

before harvesting them.

- Keeping the logging area as small as possible while leaving enough

canopy opening for sunlight to reach species that need it.

- Maintaining habitat for all native

Spotlight: Eco-friendly certified timber

You're building a deck. Or adding on to your house.

How do you know that the wood you're using isn't a product of clear-cutting, or contributing unduly to habitat loss or stream pollution?

Fortunately there are organizations out there certifying wood that has been harvested "sustainably"—doing relatively little or no damage to the environment.

Unfortunately it is often difficult for the average consumer to tell the difference between the bona fide environmental certifiers and ones backed by Big Timber.

The following is intended to sort out the legitimate environmental labels from the ones falsely made to look environmentally meritorious to win over concerned consumers.

The world of legitimate timber certification has two types of organizations.

The first type establishes the standards timber producers must meet to receive certification. This category includes only one reputable organization—the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

The second type includes companies that inspect timber operations to ensure they are meeting the FSC's standards.

The FSC was the first organization to set standards for certification. Its certification system remains the only one with broad support from environmental groups worldwide.

Headquartered in Oaxaca, Mexico, the FSC also has offices in Washington, D.C. and Toronto.

See "Certified," p. 11 col. 2

See "Sustainable logging," p. 10 col. 1

Family courage spurs life of leadership

Mentored by her mother, who escaped Poland's oppression, Rose Foundation's Jill Ratner's learned value of activism early on

Jill Ratner traces her activist roots to one person—her mother.

In fact Ratner was so inspired by her mother's commitment to civic involvement that she named her nonprofit, The Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment, after her.

With her mother as mentor, Ratner, who played a key role in efforts to establish the Headwaters Preserve in Headwaters Forest during the 1990s, began her career as an activist in junior high school.

"My mother was a terrific role model," says Ratner. "She really believed in participatory democracy. My mother took me into the halls of Congress during the Vietnam War when she buttonholed her congressional representatives. She convinced me that this was exactly what you were supposed to do, that it was appropriate behavior for a good citizen."

In her mother's experience, Ratner said, participatory democracy was what distinguished the United States from the oppression facing Poland, from which her family fled shortly before World War I. At the time, a large part of the country was controlled by Russia under the rule of Czar Nicholas II.

"My mother convinced me that it was really incumbent on every person to use the political process that was available to us here in this country to protect the values that she believed this country stood for—the values articulated in the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights."

Ratner carried those early lessons in activism into her career as an environmental and finance lawyer. Ratner graduated from U.C. Berkeley's Boalt Hall School of Law. Before co-founding the Rose Foundation, she organized a multi-cultural recycling-advocacy coalition in the Los Angeles area, effectively moving the City of Los Angeles to implement a curbside recycling program. She is a member of the Advisory Council of the Foundation

Partnership for Corporate Responsibility, and the California Coalition for Investor Responsibility.



Jill Ratner

photo by Andria Strickley

Ratner also has served on the Environmental Quality Commission and Solid Waste Advisory Board for the City of Los Angeles and on the boards of directors of Communities for a Better Environment and Californians Against Waste. She co-founded the Oakland-based Rose Foundation with husband Tim Little in 1992.

"Our hope in creating the foundation," she says, "was to move environmental issues out of the bind that was created when folks who wanted to overturn environmental protections started casting the issue as 'jobs versus the environment.'"

"That seemed to us to be a nonsensical way to look at things. A healthy economy needs a healthy environment. Our idea was that we could support projects that were trying to benefit both the environ-

ment and the community, and that worked to create a sustainable economy."

The foundation has two objectives.

The first is a grant-making program, made possible largely by restitution funds from legal settlements. The program disburses funds back to communities affected by the subject matter of the litigation. The foundation also has been working with other Northern California funders this year to create the Northern California Environmental Grassroots Fund. The goal of this fund is to allow foundations to target small grants to small, community-based organizations that are, in Ratner's words, "on the cutting edge of environmental protection."

The foundation's second purpose is direct involvement in environmental policy issues, an arena it first entered during the Headwaters Forest battle of the 1990s. Ratner's group worked intensively to promote state and federal acquisition of the forest, which was owned by Pacific Lumber Co.'s parent company MAXXAM Corp. In the process, the foundation went to the shareholders of MAXXAM and pleaded the case for more responsible management of the forest.

"We wanted the company to look for some resolution that would be good for forests, good for the North Coast communities, and good for the shareholders of MAXXAM," Ratner says.

Although permanent protection of the full forest of about 60,000 acres has not yet been achieved, the Rose Foundation helped catalyze the government purchase in 1999 of the 7,500-acre Headwaters Forest Preserve. The new preserve encompasses over 3,000 acres of ancient redwoods, including the celebrated Headwaters Grove. Forests Forever was born of efforts to save Headwaters, devoting most of its first 10 years of existence to generating broad-based public support for preserving the forest.

see "Ratner," p. 10 col. 1

Campaign and CalPIRG's Environment California.

Environmental groups battling the Forest Service's proposal emphasize that the original Framework was based on hard scientific data documenting the compromised health of the ecosystems in the Sierras.

"The Framework was the result of many years of work by fire and fuels scientists and Forest Service researchers," said John Buckley, Director of the Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center and a former Forest Service firefighter. "It was based in part on the \$7 million Congressionally funded Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project Report— the most thorough scientific analysis ever done for the Sierra Nevada region."

The original Framework covers 11 national forests in California, from Modoc National Forest in the north to Sequoia National Forest in the south. The plan was signed into law in January 2001 during the last days of the Clinton administration. At the time of its signing, the plan had received more than 47,000 public comments and peer reviews by independent scientists. The document was widely lauded by environmentalists for protecting old-growth and laying the groundwork for watershed restoration.

Under the original Framework, for example, old-growth stands one acre or larger would be off-limits to most logging, and 4.25 million acres of land would be managed as "old-forest emphasis areas" to promote old-growth values. The Bush Administration proposal would eliminate protection for old-growth stands and would allow widespread logging of medium and large trees from within these areas.

The administration of California's Gov. Gray Davis has come out in opposition to the Forest Service's proposals to alter the plan. At a press conference at the federal building in Sacramento on Sept. 9 California Resources Secretary Mary Nichols called the adoption of the original Framework "a major milestone."

"But barely had the ink dried on the signature on the Record of Decision,"

Nichols continued, "than it was whisked away and taken back for 'some changes.'"

Those changes came the same year the Framework was approved. Regional Forester Jack Blackwell, a former timber

to address the issue that the majority of lands that would be opened to increased logging are so remote that if they were to catch fire they would pose little threat to communities.

Further contradicting Blackwell's assertions, research has found that logging— and logging larger trees in particular, as Blackwell proposes— does not reduce but rather increases fire risk. This is due in part to the fact that logging larger trees reduces moisture and shade, leaving behind smaller, more-combustible trees and brush.

"Fire science shows that prescribed burning and surface-fuel treatments are the real key to change," Buckley said.

"If the public is truly concerned about wildfire on public forest lands, then the public and Congress will come up with the dollars to do those treatments."

Ecologists believe that Blackwell's proposed increase in logging, if carried out, not only would fail to reduce fires but also would pose huge threats to the health of the Sierra forest ecosystems and the wildlife that depend on these ecosystems for survival. The proposal would, among other things, further threaten endangered species including the California spotted owl, the Pacific

fisher, the willow flycatcher and the Yosemite toad.

The Forest Service now must incorporate the public comments it received into a final proposal, a process likely to take six months. If the final document includes the currently proposed changes— which environmentalists believe is a near certainty— activist groups likely will challenge the proposal in court.

— Erica Steiner



Nichols at press conference on Sierra Framework

photo by Andria Strickley

industry official newly appointed by Bush's Forest Service Chief Dale Bosworth, announced his intention to lift grazing

restrictions, raise from 20 to 30 inches the size of trees allowed for logging, and advocate logging to address "forest health" problems.

"Fire science shows that prescribed burning and surface fuel treatments are the real key to change. If the public is truly concerned about wildfire on public forest lands then the public and Congress will come up with the dollars to do those treatments."

Top among these so-called forest health problems, according to Blackwell, is the vulnerability of the region's forests to wildfires. His planned changes, however, do not acknowledge that the Framework already includes provisions for protecting areas near communities where fire protection is needed most. Blackwell also failed

"That whole process," Ratner explains, "got us looking at issues related to investment. As a result of that, we started our Environmental Fiduciary Project, which is focused on the positive correlation between environmental performance and the financial performance of corporations. This project is now much of our work."

Asked how California's forests can best be protected, Ratner, the newest member of the advisory council of Forests Forever said, "The first step is public education. My sense is that, to a large extent, people in

California believe that our forests are more protected than they are. Most Californians don't realize how little forest is left, particularly old-growth forests. Also... we probably need some new comprehensive legislation (to reform the state's timber harvesting laws), backed up with good, solid enforcement."

Ratner said that canvass organizing—Forests Forever's primary function—has a significant role in forestry activism.

"Canvass organizing is terribly important. It's a way to bring issues to people in

a person-to-person fashion. I grew up knocking on people's doors, talking to them about candidates and issues. It's hard work and takes a lot of courage. But the thing that's most exciting about it is when you can reach out to new people. Nothing," Ratner concludes, "is more powerful than one person talking to another person about an issue of importance."

— Katherine L. Kaiser

ging and other ecologically sensitive methods, is another good example of sustainable forestry at work. See "Soquel Forest: A cut above the rest" (Fall 2002 issue of "The Watershed"). In recent years Forests Forever and other groups have pushed—using litigation and citizen lobbying—to institute sustainable logging in Soquel's sibling forest, Jackson State Forest in Mendocino County.

Critics of such forestry argue that selective logging is too time-consuming and costly. While he acknowledges this type of logging requires more labor than conventional methods, Zuckerman argues that this is a good thing. While industrial logging is becoming increasingly automated—eliminating jobs—sustainable logging creates more jobs because it requires the labor of hands-on workers.

Sustainable logging may be more expensive to timber companies in the short-term than common industrial methods, but is far less costly to the forests themselves and the wildlife that inhabits them, Zuckerman says.

Moreover, the enormous costs of watershed damage, erosion control, and losses to local industries such as fishing and tourism now are borne by the public rather than the timber industry.

One of the many forestry experts who echo Zuckerman's call for balance between human and non-human forest use is Herb Hammond, a forest ecologist known throughout Canada for his vision of sus-

tainable forestry. Hammond calls this balance "Wholistic Forest Use."

"Within the context of ecological responsibility, we must ensure that all forest users—human and non-human—have fair, legally protected land bases that are well distributed throughout the forest, sufficient to meet their needs, and adequate to ensure that their functions are maintained in the ecosystem," Hammond writes in "Clearcut: The Tragedy of Industrial

basins"). Figure 2 shows a blow-up of the area labeled "small landscape" in Figure 1. The detail of this landscape shows old-growth nodes, where logging would not be allowed. Logging would be restricted in the areas deemed "ecologically sensitive," such as high-elevation forests. Logging also would be limited in the riparian zone—the area immediately bordering a river or stream.

Environmental foresters such as Hammond agree that "wholistic forestry" (the kind that takes place in the white zones in figure 2) is characterized by removal of a variety of sizes and species of trees from an area in any given cycle (or conversely, leaving mixed age classes and species behind), as well as retention of down logs in streams as well as on the forest floor, and retention of a significant percentage of the canopy.

Maser, the former BLM consultant, firmly believes that the potential for revolution in forestry practices is limited only by our own imaginations.

"As Han Solo said in the movie 'The Empire Strikes Back,' 'Don't ever tell me the odds,' which means we're only limited by what we think we can't do.

"It isn't that we don't know enough to grow sustainable forests. We simply have chosen not to. The choice is ours. The consequences are ours and the future's."

— A.S.

"...(W)e must ensure that all forest users—human and non-human—have fair, legally protected land bases that are well distributed throughout the forest..."

Forestry" (Earth Island Press, 1993).

The protected areas, Hammond says, must be large enough to withstand natural disturbances and be connected across the landscape by semi-protected corridors through which plants and animals can migrate.

Hammond's approach to sustainable forestry here is a sort-of zoning methodology with certain areas set aside as no-cut, others (such as wildlife corridors) as limited-cut and still other areas open to sensitive logging.

Figure 1 on page 7 shows a map of a landscape that includes large protected watershed areas (labeled "drainage

The Watershed

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*"Restore,
Reinhabit,
Re-enchant"*

"Certified"
continued from p. 7

Founded in 1993 largely by the Sierra Club and World Wildlife Fund, the council also was created with help from timber industry representatives, foresters, indigenous peoples and community groups.

The FSC's extensive criteria for certification range from protecting ancient forests and conserving the forest's biological diversity to allowing indigenous peoples to retain control of their forestlands.

The majority of other certification schemes around the world have been created by the timber industry, said Jennifer Krill of the San Francisco-based Rainforest Action Network.

"The trend toward green logging has caused the industry worldwide to create a whole lot more green stamps of approval," Krill said.

The primary industry group "competing" with the FSC is the American Forest and Paper Association (AFPA). In response to the FSC's standards, the AFPA introduced its own certification standards called the "Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI)."

Krill says the AFPA essentially copied the FSC's standards. But while FSC's guidelines are mandatory for certification, SFI's are voluntary, Krill says. This means that companies notorious for their bad logging practices, including California's Pacific Lumber Co. and Sierra Pacific Industries, can achieve certification under the SFI standards.

"Those two companies have done nothing to change their practices to achieve the certification," Krill said.

The FSC, on the other hand, enlists 11 organizations worldwide to carry out on-the-ground inspections of timber companies' practices. Two of these are active in the U.S.: SmartWood (a program of the Rainforest Alliance) and Scientific Certification Systems.

Once the timber is certified, it is marked with the council's "FSC" seal. A database of companies certified by the council is available at www.certifiedwood.org.

Despite its credibility in the eyes of many environmental groups, the FSC is not without its critics.

The U.K.-based Rainforest Foundation released a report in 2002 pointing out what it called "serious flaws" in the council's certification system. The report contended, among other things, that the council's auditors have a vested interest in certifying timber companies regardless of whether or not they actually comply with the certification standards.

Krill acknowledges that the FSC's system has its problems.

"It's not perfect. In fact, it's far from it," she said.

As an example, the FSC's recent certification of Mendocino Redwood Company (headquartered in Mendocino County) caused a maelstrom of controversy because it did not take local activists' concerns into account, Krill says. The company was certified despite objections over its logging in habitat for endangered species such as coho salmon.

Although FSC does have flaws, it is still the best certification system in wide use, Krill said. Additionally, she says, her group tries to avoid battling FSC decisions even if they are not perfect. To do so, she says, "would distract us from fighting industry-sponsored certification, which is a whole lot worse."

For more information visit:

www.certifiedwood.org

www.fscus.org

www.smartwood.org

— A.S.

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be rewritten and go through a public hearing process. This means that logging in Jackson almost certainly will not go forward until at least May 2004.

Timber companies and state forestry officials complained that the logging delay will cost them a lot of money. Henderson placed the blame for the potential income loss squarely with the forestry department, however.

"CDF and the Board (of Forestry) had every reason to believe that their approval of the updated Management Plan would be subjected to close judicial scrutiny," Henderson wrote. "With that in mind, CDF and the Board should have scrupulously followed the procedures adopted by the legislature to minimize the risk of an inevitable court challenge and the potential economic hardship on the management of (Jackson) and on the local timber industry."

"What's so shocking here is that the court has prevented (the forestry department) from logging its own forest—a forest that is supposed to be demonstrating enlightened forestry," said Paul Carroll, attorney for Forests Forever and the Jackson Campaign. "It's such an embarrassment."

It would be one thing to see such a flawed environmental report from an agency that does not oversee the state's resources, Carroll said. But it is the forestry department's job to protect the environ-

ment, he said.

"We actually tried very hard to bring their errors to their attention even before the report was out and they ridiculed us," Carroll added.

Forests Forever Foundation Board President Mark Fletcher said the ruling increases the chances of passing legislation to end intensive commercial logging in the forest permanently.

"At the time we started beating the drum on the Jackson issue two years ago no one even knew it existed," Fletcher said.

could return to conditions mirroring old-growth.

The forestry department, however, has logged Jackson for decades, providing up to \$15 million annually to the agency's coffers in recent years.

Forests Forever first became involved in efforts to preserve Jackson in 2001. From the beginning of its campaign, the organization generated nearly 50,000 letters, postcards and commitments to call, fax or write state legislators and forestry officials regarding Jackson.

In the fall of 2002 Forests Forever generated most of the 4,800 public-comment letters on the management plan. Of that total only 49 favored CDF's logging scheme.

Additionally, Forests Forever worked in early 2003 with Sierra Club California and the Jackson Campaign to introduce legislation to end large-scale commercial logging in Jackson and change the state forest system's mandate to restoration of old-

growth characteristics.

No lawmaker has yet agreed to sponsor the bill. Yet the groups made significant progress toward bringing the issue out of obscurity and into the legislature's awareness.

The Jackson Campaign has hired a consultant to help initiate a second go at introducing legislation to restore the forest. Forests Forever likely will play a part in drafting a new bill and in building public support for the legislation.

— A.S.

"What's so shocking here is that the court has prevented (the forestry department) from logging its own forest—a forest that is supposed to be demonstrating enlightened forestry."

"Some in the state legislature weren't even aware that California had a state forest system.

"We brought Jackson's existence and its problems into full view. That's the starting point for passing a reform bill."

Jackson, which is located in Mendocino County between the towns of Mendocino and Ft. Bragg, is an oasis of second-growth redwoods surrounded by cutover industrial timberland. Many of these second-growth trees are between 80 and 110 years old. If large-scale timber operations there are ended the 50,000-acre forest eventually

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