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Forest Conference-Soda Mountain

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National Wildlife Federation
 1400 16th St., N.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20036

TO: Will Stelle

FAX: 456-2710

COMPANY NAME: OEP

COMMENTS: Hi. Hope I can see you this week.

Would like to see Katy, too -- doesn't have to be

at same time. Will bring color maps showing criticality of

Pages Including cover: 3

FAX: 202-797-6646

*connection described
in letter -- and*

FROM: Biodiversity & Conservation

— Doug Inkley - 797-6878
 — Cathy Carlson - 797-6861
 — Glenn Sugameli - 797-6865
 — Fran Hunt - 797-6862

— Terry Schley - 797-6880 *documentary*
 — Suzanne Jones - 797-6666
 — John Horning - 797-6863
 — Myra Wilensky - 797-6823
 — Patti Pride - 797-6877
 — DAVE WILLIS 797-6652 *Please call*

If problems occur with this transmission; please call Lauren Saver at 797-6875.

*Went - please
 fax to Tom Tushman
 and Tom Sugameli (BES Team)
 for their comments / response
 Dave
 Mux*



Soda Mountain Wilderness Council

P.O. Box 512 • Ashland, Oregon 97520

March 5, 1994

To: CLINTON FOREST PLAN EXECUTIVE TEAM

Re: CHANGE BETWEEN FSEIS & ROD
OR/CA BORDER: INTERSTATE 5 CONNECTION
SISKIYOU PASS/PILOT ROCK/SODA MOUNTAIN
INVIOLEATE "RESERVE" DESIGNATION NEEDED

Option 9 of both draft and final allocated this key, largely ROADLESS CONNECTIVITY CORRIDOR as "Matrix." When we saw the DSEIS, we were sure this was an error -- and pointed it out in our comments to the SEIS team. The area was "Critical Habitat" in both the Thomas Report (4/90) and USFWS Recovery Plan (12/91). Most or all of the area was "Reserve" in every option but Option 9. ALL the ROADLESS AREA was "Reserve" in EVERY option but Option 9.

With the strongest feeling and urgency we respectfully request again that this area be given inviolate "Reserve" status before the ROD is signed.

Timber values in this area are low (hence the roadlessness) -- but ecological values are extremely high. This is a key connectivity corridor between the Cascade and Siskiyou Mountains -- the most floristically diverse range in the western United States.

Because of the crucial but already strained and extremely narrow connectivity here, impacts to this corridor are geographically far reaching. This land bridge needs more than any temporary local deferrals the Medford BLM District may (or may not) offer it in the "Matrix." The FSEIS says clearly: "All land allocations except the matrix contribute to connectivity between Late-Successional-Reserves" (II F-14).

USFS Area Ecologist for all of SW Oregon, Dr. Tom Atzet, is on record as saying, "Matrix in this area is the biggest problem with the Clinton Forest Plan in southwestern Oregon" (office 503/471-6531, home 476-9397).

Former Oregon/Washington BLM State Director, Bill Luscher, wrote the Nat'l BLM Acting Director, "I urge that this area be considered for reserve status to ensure that the biological diversity of this unique and irreplaceable ecosystem is maintained" (2/15/94).

Even the editor of the Medford Mail Tribune wrote, "Of all the places where the over-reaching Clinton Plan reaches, one notable omission is Pilot Rock and the proposed Soda Mountain Wilderness on the Oregon-California border. The problem is that the plan doesn't extend any "forest reserve" protection to this area; it's all part of the commercial forest base" (3/4/94, p. 12A).

(over)

Page 2, SISKIYOU PASS/PILOT ROCK/SODA MTN NEEDS "RESERVE" IN ROD

Oregon Governor Barbara Roberts mentioned only two places by name in her letter to President Clinton: "Some of the roadless areas in the matrix in the draft plan are considered special places ... and are highly controversial. Examples include portions of the South Kalmiopsis and Soda Mountain.... Roding in these areas should be reevaluated against other opportunities for harvest" (10/27/93, page 2 of 3 -- contact Bob Warren, Forest Planning Team, 503/328-8127).

The specialness and controversy regarding roadlessness here should not be overlooked. The matrix corridor surrounds the 5,800 acre Soda Mountain BLM Wilderness (recommended) Study Area. The roadless country here is part of the 30,000 acre plus citizen-supported Soda Mountain Wilderness proposal. Based on twenty-six hearings statewide during the Oregon BLM Wilderness Review Process, Dave Harmon, Wilderness Studies Coordinator in the BLM WA/OR State Office reported the Soda Mountain-Pilot Rock area to have "more support than any other wilderness proposal or WSA in the state" (503/280-7062).

Expressing the unanimous support of the Ashland City Council, Mayor Catherine Golden wrote the SEIS team: "... the Ashland City Council supports the changes to Option 9 recommended by the Soda Mountain Wilderness Council Board, which recommends that this area should be designated ... with boundaries as described in Option 1. The Reserve Area should also reflect the management prescription as described in Option 1" (9/27/93).

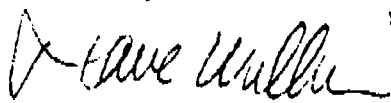
Dr. Stephen Cross, Mammalogist (503/482-8380), and Dr. Frank Lang, Botanist (503/482-5235) both of the Department of Biology, Southern Oregon State College, both "fully support 'Reserve' allocation" for the area.

The BLM now claims they will manage this largely roadless, key connectivity corridor in the matrix as a "Special Emphasis Area" with a 10 year deferred cut and 150 year rotation in their upcoming Resource Management Plan. We appreciate their recent temporary but local recognition of the area's values -- despite the fact that the FSEIS says matrix is the only Forest Plan allocation that does not contribute to connectivity (II F-14).

However, because of the significant greater-than-local ecological value of the connectivity here between the Cascades and outstandingly biodiverse Siskiyou -- and because of the extremely high value placed on this area as a roadless wilderness proposal by so many Oregonians (and Californians) -- this area needs the maximum protection possible in the Clinton Forest Plan.

The Soda Mountain Wilderness Council, the Siskiyou Regional Education Project, Headwaters, the Rogue Group Sierra Club, and many other forest advocacy groups -- along with the persons above -- urge you to **PUT THE SODA MOUNTAIN/PILOT ROCK/SISKIYOU PASS matrix area in inviolate RESERVE before the ROD is signed.**

Most sincerely,



Dave Willis, Board
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council
Siskiyou Regional Education Project

503/482-0526, 482-2307, FAX 482-8660

(In DC March 7-11 <+?> via 797-6842)