

# Logging

## Without Laws

**“...arguably the worst piece of public lands legislation ever.”**

— The Washington Post (Sept. 10, 1996)



**A Report on the Timber Salvage Rider  
of the 104th Congress**

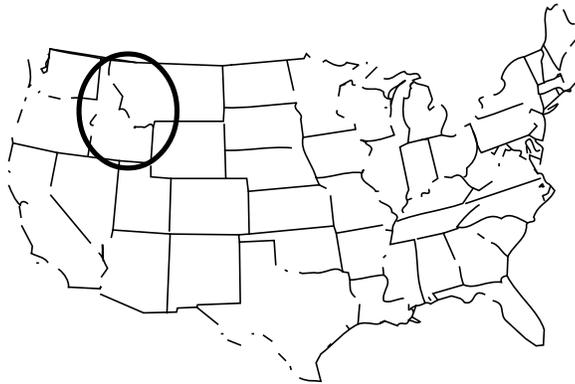


**“The rape of the national forests is an ongoing outrage. And there’s no ‘correcting’ the damage done by clear-cutting forests that protect our watersheds and hold our soils.”**

— The Des Moines Register, editorial (July 10, 1996)

## Logging Without Laws

This report documents the Forest Service’s failure to administer responsibly the timber salvage rider. Evidence for this report is based upon Forest Service documents, investigative reporting and the U.S. Government’s Interagency Salvage Program Review.



**The Northern Rockies bioregion was a major target of the clearcut timber rider. Over 894 million board feet (MMBF) of timber were logged from more than 150,000 acres of National Forest land in Idaho and Montana.**

**“Although the rider expired this week, the physical and political scars will be lasting.”**

— Washington Post (January 2, 1997)

## The Legacy of the Clear Cut Salvage Rider

The “lawless logging” timber salvage rider clearly was a mistake. It wreaked ecological havoc, leaving a wake of clearcuts, degraded water quality, and landslides. Not only did the rider damage property, it also seriously damaged public confidence and trust in both the politicians who condoned the rider and the Forest Service which failed to protect the public’s resources.

**“The law [timber salvage rider] has opened the way - in fact, it has laid out a welcome mat - for logging which will destroy these forests as well as pollute streams and watersheds, damage fisheries and cause the loss of endangered wildlife.”**

— Kansas City Star, editorial  
(August 28, 1996)

Twenty years of environmental laws and a meaningful public participation process were destroyed in July of 1995 when President Clinton signed the rescissions bill and approved the salvage rider.

The rider allowed practically any timber sale to be labeled salvage and thus be exempted from environmental laws, and insulated from both public scrutiny and judicial review.

The rider has run its course and the effects - both on the ground and on the attitude of the American public - now can be assessed.

**“The federal government pays for building the roads to the logging sites and for the administrative costs of preparing the sales. Yet the sales are notoriously low-revenue-yielding. A General Accounting Office report found that for the 1992-1994 fiscal years, the cost to the treasury of this sort of folly was \$995 million.”**

— Kansas City Star, editorial (August 28, 1996)



## Economics

**\$1 billion**

**103 out of 118  
\$450**

**All**

**Approx. 22,900**

**No change**

**\$2,449,900,000**

**\$58 million**

## Economic Realities of Public Lands Logging

### Running in the Red

- Dollars added to the national debt between 1992-1994 to harvest trees from National Forest lands:
  - Number of National Forests that lost money on their timber programs (1992-1994):
- Nation-wide average loss per harvested acre (1992-1994):
  - Number of National Forests in Montana and Idaho that lost money between 1992 and 1994 :

### Increased Logging does not Translate into More Jobs

- Number of jobs Congressman Taylor claimed the salvage rider would directly and indirectly create in the forest products industry:
- Change in employment in the forest products industry as of 2nd quarter of 1995 in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, and California:

### Cost of Replanting Logged-over Lands

- Forest Service costs for planting and seeding for the years 1977-1994:

### Ecological Damage and other Hidden Costs

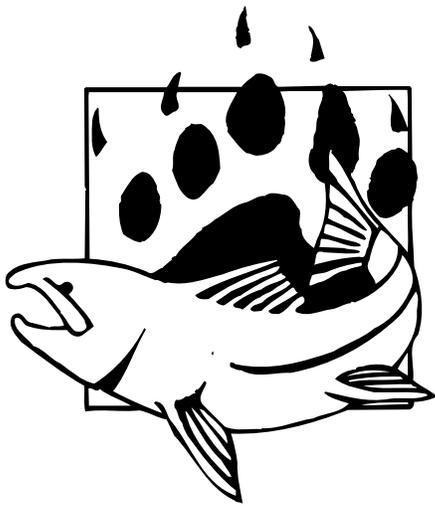
- Estimated costs of off-site damage of sediment associated with cutting the 4.5 billion board feet of timber projected under the salvage clearcut rider:

**Logging and roadbuilding can cause mudslides, road failures, and flooding. Taxpayers pay the associated costs of dredging waterways, repairing roads and removing sediment from water supplies.**

**“To date, no Forest Service budget documents have identified transfers of excess collections from the Salvage Sale fund to the U.S. Treasury.”**

— Congressional Research Service (1996)

**IN FACT** The Timber Salvage Sale Fund’s money is used to perpetuate and/or expand salvage logging efforts. But total costs of salvage logging are not covered by the Fund, and require further appropriations.



**The  
“Forest Health”  
Myth &  
Endangered  
Wildlife**

The public lands of the Northern Rockies contain the largest remaining tracts of native forests in the lower 48 states. Some of the rarest and most endangered species in the United States still inhabit this Great American landscape, including: grizzly bear (threatened), woodland caribou (endangered), gray wolf (threatened), and bull trout (sensitive). In order to survive, these animals require secure habitat, clean water, and room to roam. Protecting wildlife habitat and key wildlife species is the best hope we have of ensuring the long term ecological integrity and economic stability of the region.

**“There is no forest emergency meriting the suspension of environmental considerations or public input and appeals. The only emergency now is the one that was created by the overboard ‘salvage’ operation.”**

— Pittsburgh Post Gazette, editorial (July 31, 1996)

**Timber harvesting, roadbuilding, and fire suppression degrade wildlife habitat and weaken the ecological integrity of native ecosystems. These activities are the true threats to healthy forests.**

**“ It [the Forest Service] has no interest in implementing a modern generation of laws such as the Endangered Species Act.”**

— Clinton Administration Official  
(The Washington Post, January 2, 1997)

## **Log Now, Pay Forever...**

Over **\$200 million** is spent annually in federal, regional and state expenditures to recover salmon in the Pacific Northwest (OR, WA, ID). At the same time the American taxpayer is subsidizing the destruction of critical salmon habitat: **1)** The Forest Service loses millions of dollars every year on below cost timber sales. **2)** Logging and roadbuilding destroys habitat, degrades water quality, and inflates the costs of recovery efforts. **3)** The commercial fishing industry is paralyzed by the loss of fishing opportunities.

• Assertion of general “forest health” in the 1995 Salvage Rider:

• Number of species, nation-wide, of birds, mammals and amphibians which use dead trees for food, nesting or shelter:

• Percentage of mis-diagnoses on sales in the Northwest between 1990-95:

**Not mentioned**

**149, 73, 93  
(and nearly all fish)**

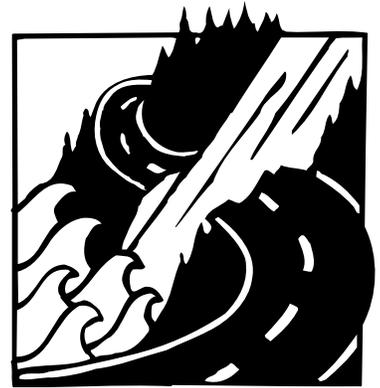
**>80%**

**“Our findings suggest that this type of harvest [salvage] is not compatible with contemporary Ecosystem-based management.”**

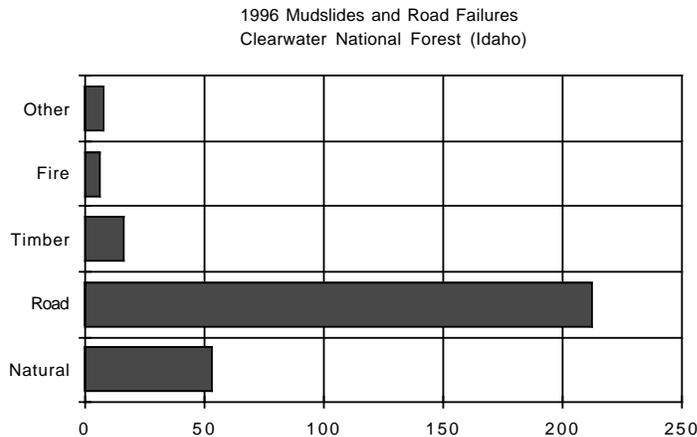
— USDA Forest Service Upper Columbia Scientific Assessment (1996)

**“We have ways of harvesting today that leave a comparatively light footprint on the land.”**

— Bob Dick, Washington manager of the NW Forestry Association (Spokesman-Review, March 28, 1995)



**Forest Service roads such as this one (below) are costly and extremely unstable. This road failed in December 1995, depositing tons of sediment directly into the North Fork of the Clearwater River.**



## Roads & Unnatural Disasters

**Over 220 road blow outs and mudslides occurred on the Clearwater National Forest in areas associated with roads and logging activities.**



## The Ecological Effects of Roads

- Erosion from unpaved logging roads clog streams with sediment, contributing to population declines of fish such as salmon and bull trout.
- Many wild animals - grizzly bears and lynx, for example - avoid or will not cross roads. For these species, one road effectively cuts available habitat in half, while road networks carve entire landscapes into habitat islands, isolating populations and reducing their long-term viability.

## How Many Roads are Enough?

- Miles of Forest Service roads: **over 370,000** (documented)
- Times that the combined length of Forest Service roads would circle the Earth's equator: **15**
- Length of the Forest Service road system compared to that of the U.S. Highway system: **8 times greater**

## The Economic Realities of Roads

- In 1996, **\$95 million** was appropriated to the Forest Service for the construction and reconstruction of roads...
- From 1985 to 1996, **\$1.9 billion** was appropriated to the Forest Service solely for road construction and reconstruction...
- An additional **\$938 million** was appropriated for road maintenance during the same time period...
- In addition, over **\$42 million** has been spent for emergency repairs (1988-1995).

**“Lawmakers must match their professed concern for the environment with action when it counts.”**

— The Washington Post (Sept 10, 1996)

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\*partial list

**“We won't have a society if we destroy the environment.”**

—Margaret Mead

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Web Site of Environmental Groups of the Northern Rockies: "<http://www.wildrockies.org>"