



Check out the fun photos starting on page 10
The event in Yachats by the Emerald Curtain Collective.

2025: Year of Resistance

The Forest Service Exposed: It's About the Money

Dear Friends & Supporters,

I write to share news about the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) comments of the Coast Range Association (CRA) and a [new perspective on Pacific Northwest forests](#). Our vision is in sync with the reality of a warming climate, the risk of wildfire and the true nature of our coastal and Northwest forests.

And, I ask that you renew support for our small organization. Given what we face, we'll need every penny. CRA supporters were generous in 2024, but the struggle is moving to a new level. No less than the fate of our region is on the line.

Here's the report.

The Forest Plan Amendments

Two months ago, I sat down with the NWFP amendments Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Whoa, at two volumes and over 1,000 pages, I knew I had some work to do. My job was to assess the DEIS for the adequacy of its underlying science and thoroughness of its analysis.

Hold on to your hat for this one.

Digging into the science behind the DEIS topics revealed an amazing picture about Oregon's coastal region. No one part of the science told the whole story but when I put things together – wow. Oregon's coastal region—the Coast Range—is a very special place! Here's what I pieced together.

I focused on three topics discussed in the DEIS: **wildfire, climate and forest stewardship**.

Not only was it quickly clear the DEIS was lacking proper analysis, but science pointed toward dramatically different conclusions. What I learned has huge implications for the forests of the Coast Range and Pacific Northwest. I'll briefly address each topic. Our full set of comments are on the CRA's website (top left) at: <https://coastrange.org/>

Climate

Addressing climate, the DEIS is full of namby-pamby rhetoric. In response, I dropped the hammer hard about the state of the climate. Quoting the World Scientists' Warning of a Climate Emergency we stated its first two sentences; ***"We are now at "code red" on planet Earth. Humanity is unequivocally facing a climate emergency."***

We further quote from the letter "Since this original [scientist] warning, there has been a roughly 40% increase in global greenhouse gas emissions. This is despite numerous written warnings from the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC] and a recent scientists' warning of a climate emergency with nearly 15,000 signatories from 158 countries. Current policies are taking the planet to around 3 degrees Celsius warming by 2100, a temperature level that Earth has not experienced over the past 3 million years..."

In case you are wondering, global warming of 3 degrees Celsius will make the earth uninhabitable for most of the planet's people due to a lethal combination of temperature and humidity. Global 3

degrees Celsius is around 15 degrees Fahrenheit warmer on land. We then note that “the current administration’s **Executive Order 14154**, called Unleashing American Energy, is exactly the policy agenda that will cause a 3 degrees warmer earth.” Good grief!

Yesterday, The Guardian reported on a letter by Günther Thallinger, former CEO of Allianz SE - one of the world’s biggest insurance companies. Thallinger writes "Once we reach 3°C of warming, the situation locks in. At that point, risk cannot be transferred (no insurance), risk cannot be absorbed (no public capacity), and risk cannot be adapted to (physical limits exceeded). That means no more mortgages, no new real estate development, no long-term investment, no financial stability. The financial sector as we know it ceases to function. And with it, capitalism as we know it ceases to be viable."

Our assessment of the DEIS climate section is this: *“The DEIS does not acknowledge that climate conditions are rapidly evolving such that events, processes and states of a warmer earth are occurring much sooner than previously expected. The DEIS does not acknowledge that the mitigation [taking CO2 out of the air] needed to reverse climate warming is falling far short of needed goals. The DEIS does not acknowledge near adequately the potential future carbon storage volumes in moist, wet and rainforest zones of the NWFP.”*

After reviewing the carbon storage potential of Siuslaw National Forest and other National Forests, only one conclusion can be drawn—manage the forests for carbon sequestration, not climate warming timber cutting!

Wildfire

Here’s where things get interesting. The DEIS claims it will address forest **resilience** and **resistance** to wildfire. The DEIS then drops resistance and only speaks to resilience. Why? The answer is that if they discuss how to make a forest resistant to wildfire, they would damn their own stewardship proposals. And that’s where wildfire refugia science comes in.

A huge study by OSU researchers wanted to know why much of a forest does not burn during wildfire. Where a forest doesn’t burn is termed a **wildfire refugia**. As you can imagine, wildfire is complicated. Yearly rainfall and weather conditions are very important. Type of forest vegetation, hillslope and aspect are factors. Researchers studied the entire area of the NWFP using satellite

imagery. From the data, they looked for the characteristics of the forest **that did not burn**.

My takeaway from the research is this; for most **moist** and all **wet** and **rainforest** areas, during a normal rainfall year, the forest is naturally fire resistant. But reducing canopy cover to less than 75% puts the forest at risk due to the drying effects of summer temperature and wind. The **75% canopy closure for fire resistance** was the metric I've been looking for.

For thirty years, the Forest Service has been thinning the hell out of earlier Siuslaw clearcuts. Less than 40% of the canopy often remains after thinning. Almost always less than 75%. Why? Because the agency's thinning projects are commercial timber sales for income.

For thirty years, many in the conservation community have supported Siuslaw National Forest thinning projects. And for thirty years the climate has been warming and increasing wildfire risk. It's time to challenge commercial thinning because **thinning for money** removes too many trees which increases wildfire risk.

But wait, there are new factors to consider. For the Pacific Northwest, climate models predict future winter and spring rains will **increase**, while the summers will be hotter and drier. And winter storms will come with more intense rainfall and higher winds. So how does more winter and spring moisture carry over into a summer fire-resistant-forest? By having a protective, intact forest canopy and a deep forest floor of moisture holding biomass. Plus, an intact forest canopy resists winter wind damage. The need for an intact canopy is what threatens the Forest Service thinning program on the Siuslaw National Forest.

A picture appeared as to why the Forest Service might see a financial threat from wildfire resistance. And what do you know, the DEIS never mentioned **wildfire refugia** once and avoided discussing **wildfire resistance**. Instead, the Forest Service proposes to cut a billion board feet of forest per year, for billionaire lumber barons and their billion-dollar companies. All the while, the DEIS argues that more timber cutting will help struggling communities near Forest Service lands.

I'm not going into the DEIS's discussion for Sustainable Communities. Our Comments-B document on the CRA's website addresses that topic. Suffice it to say that the Coast Range Association, almost alone, has addressed rural economics and rural land ownership and

proposed real solutions to help sustain rural communities. [See this CRA report.](#)

In Appendix 1 of our Comments-B, we list every sector and sub-sector of the U.S. economy with its dollar sales. Then we note that the yearly sales value of the entire timber and lumber industry for the entire U.S. is \$57 billion dollars. Only a bit more than the U.S. spends on pet food in a year (\$50 billion)!

The fact that the largest U.S. business sector by far is banking, finance and insurance speaks volumes about how messed up the economy is. Now we have a demigod making hay out the economic mess we're in. But I digress.

Forest Stewardship

For readability, I've rewritten a portion of the DEIS's **Forest Stewardship** introduction. Here's what it says; *updates Forest Stewardship to address the need for mature and old-growth forest conditions, restore ecosystem resilience to wildfire and other disturbance due to climate change, and provide timber and other forest values to support community sustainability. Alternative B will provide direction to identify moist and dry forest at the stand scale;*"

The Forest Service is offering a quid pro quo. They'll keep saying they are protecting mature and old growth forests in trade for cutting a billion-board-foot a year of timber, much of it in mature or old growth forests. And hey, we'll make the forest resilient **not resistant** to the inevitable wildfires we cause due to our stewardship. And since we have different standards for moist and dry forests, we'll provide clear guidance when timber sales are planned. Am I reassured? No!

Another Revelation - Forest Types

Which takes me to another issue I discovered. Since the Forest Service first announced the amendment process, I was not comfortable with the **moist-dry forest types**. Something didn't seem right. I'm familiar with ecoregional mapping used by scientists. After all, the NWFP is based on bioregions—the Coast Range is one. Where in science literature did moist or dry come from?

So, I queried bioregional mapping and similar phrases. Sure enough, "**cool moist forest**" caught a few science articles. Bingo, articles about Holdridge Life Zones were listed and the Holdridge

scheme has a forest type called cool moist forest—the technical name used in the DEIS. But right along with cool moist forest are **cool wet forest** and **cool rainforest**! And what do you know, the article I’m reading was written by Forest Service Research Station staff.

Why would the Forest Service drop the wet and rainforest types? A map of Life Zones shows the Willamette National Forest is a combination of wet and moist forest types. The Siuslaw National Forest is a cool wet forest south of Newport and a cool rainforest to the north. Now things were making more sense!

My conclusion is this; when the agency decided to drop an analysis of wildfire resistant forests, any use of the wet and rainforest types would have revealed their omission. It would have been impossible to explain the natural ecology of cool wet and rainforests and not discuss their wildfire resistance. So, they swept the two forest types, refugia science and wildfire resistance all under the rug hoping no one would notice.

I’m not a paranoid type of person, but I did grow up in the culture of Chicago. When things don’t add up, I look for the money. In the artificial funding scarcity created by Congress, the Forest Service freaked out and created a forest stewardship story for “resilient” forests – **cause-fires-gonna-happen**. And wildfire fighting is where there’s budget money!

Coup or Not a Coup

Under President Biden, the agency made decisions to hide crucial issues for timber money and possibly to save their jobs. Now, Elon Musk is running around with his DOGE buddies. That's ironic. It's going to be cut timber, fund your budget or your fired! People say a coup is occurring. Many are wringing hands about democracy. Well, there's some truth there but, once again, things might not be what they seem.

If you read the Constitution, Congress is the center of power in the federal government. But ever since the era of potential nuclear war and the rise of the military industrial complex, Congress has handed more and more power to the President. It's shocking, but a person elected to Congress today can literally go to DC and do almost nothing. The power of Congress to control the budget is not functioning. No budget was passed last year or this year—just a continuing resolution. Which means the Forest Service is shrinking every day by the rate of inflation!

So now we have Musk running around abusing **powers Congress should not have handed** any President in the first place. Many predicted all this decades ago. Notice the Republicans don't wave the constitution around anymore. But I digress again.

Reality vs Whatever is going on in DC

It's hard to say if the people in power today have an ideology or a set of principled beliefs. It appears to be a grab-the-money-and-run operation. Today the oligarchs run the government. But there is a world outside that rolls according to the laws of physics. And that world, our world, is rapidly warming. The president can wipe climate issues from websites, fire scientists and say climate warming is a hoax. But the problem will only get worse.

Here's the good news from my DEIS research. Our Northwest temperate forests are far more special than I had previously imagined. And that's saying something. Our forests are the greatest in the world for capturing carbon and helping mitigate climate warming. How to manage our forests for a climate mission is known. Coastal forests, from California to British Columbia, are the greatest of the great! Our true forest carbon potential, like forest fire resistance and wildfire refugia science, has been swept under a rug. The greatness of Oregon's forests is not something taught in the schools, even in "liberal" Oregon.

Our Mission in 2025 and Beyond

Going forward, the Coast Range Association, working with hundreds of grassroots voices, will declare throughout the region—here is what we know about a warming climate! Here is what we now know about managing our forests—the greatest forests on the planet! Our story is as relevant to **north coast state forests** as federal forests to the south.

Our forests, if managed right, can resist wildfire and climate warming! We must reverse the build-up of climate warming carbon in the air. The solution is all around us—manage the forests right! There's a boatload of science to deliver in every part of the region. There is much to teach and learn. There is a story to tell.

Resistance Required

This year's theme is resistance. Make our forest resistant to wildfire while resisting the Oligarch's attack on public purpose and vulnerable people. I appeal to everyone reading this message, join the resistance! Along with resistance comes the need for solidarity. It's about **all-of-us** vs **those-in-power** working to wreck public value; spew hate and persecute the weak and afraid. We can win, we must win, and we will win! Time and physics are on our side. Our job is to stay strong and speak the truth.

Politics

Resistance to abusive power, by definition, is a political struggle. We must go deep into the constitution and explain how government could, should and must work for people. We must demand Congress restore its power over an imperial presidency. And, we'll bring high-level issues down to practical realities in our communities and forests.

Here are just several short term political efforts:

1. Engage the Congressional delegation about its constitutional power and demand they forcefully act. No more pabulum town halls and drive-by community engagement. Talk to us!
2. Demand our federal elected leaders fund the Forest Service & BLM for climate stewardship and not timber output. Even if they fail in the coming year, let's see them try.
3. Educate in every community about climate, wildfire and the missing science that was swept under the rug.

Already, we have five new videos going into social media. Here is a link to one of the videos:

[Protect What You Love](#) It will take time and much work to bring the amazing story of our forests into every town and hamlet across the region. It won't be easy to challenge elected leaders about difficult issues.

Our new perspective on coastal forests has huge implications for Oregon's Tillamook and Clatsop State Forests. Completion of the new state forest plan is a no-brainer. What is the Governor, the Legislature and the Board of Forestry waiting for? The world's on fire and the super-majority in Salem fiddles.

It may be a year before the Forest Service completes the NWFP amendments. And it may be that the administration's new Forest Service leadership cancels the whole thing. No matter what the

agency decides, the truth won't change about our forests!

Whatever happens in the coming months, we aren't waiting to find out. We're acting today about the truth of our forests. But we can't do what's required without your support. We paid a hefty bill for the videos. Please consider a generous donation to our small but hard-hitting organization—the Coast Range Association. My grandchildren are counting on all of us. Their children's lives will depend on what we do today. I know a better world is possible!

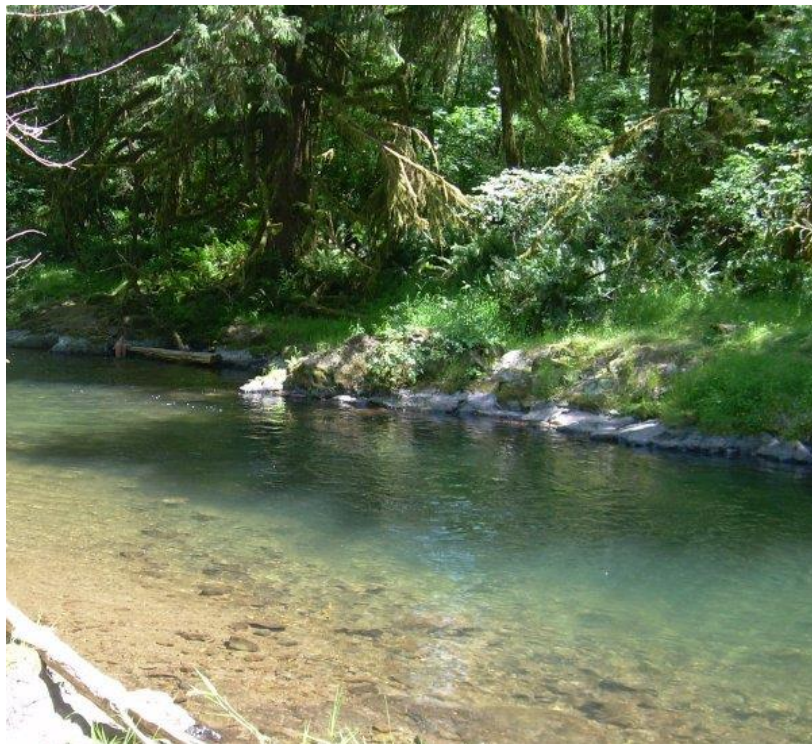
In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Chuck Willer".

Chuck Willer

Director

PS. Things are darn serious, and we have important work to do. Donate \$10 to cover the cost of this and future communications. Thank you. [Here's the donation link.](#)



Clean water, free from pesticides, is what people demand.

Intact native forests provide for streams with abundant clean water and native salmon habitat.

Yachats Event a Huge Success

Thank You Emerald Curtain Collective!

On February 28, the newly formed [Emerald Curtain Collective](#) held a fund raiser for the Coast Range Association. The event was at the Yachats Commons. The celebration of the forest was a huge success. The event featured amazing music, a skit, costumes, masks, super good food and a silent auction. Wow, lots of folks work very hard to pull off a spectacular event. A special shout must go to Willow, Moss, Heather, Richie, Liz, Emy, River and Steven and more! Without their leadership and energy the event would not have happened.

And thank you Commons Manager **Rosa Marchand**. Rosa made sure a complex event worked smoothly with the facilities.



Yachats Common's main room was full as the **My Song Your Song** band played a great set of music. Your Song My Song is an environmental justice-focused children's entertainment group from the central coast that writes music about connecting to the planet. Find out more about their music here: [My Song Your Song](#)



Liz Fox stands in front of a photo-op installation she created. Forest mural and a stump by Liz. Salmon loaned from the Wild Things Festival



The Spruce Tips group with EmyDaniels singing. They were sooo good! Its great to have coastal musicians that help protect our precious forests.



Members of the coastal Emerald Curtain Collective gather after the event for a photo. It was a day to remember, and a job well done. Thank you for the fund raiser! Sign up for ECC news here: [ECC News](#)



And **thank you** to the people and organizations who tabled at the event:
[Cape Perpetua Collaborative](#),
[Seven Capes Bird Alliance](#),
[View the Future](#),
[Jamie Lee Therapy](#),
[Tenmile Creek Sanctuary](#),
[Lincoln County Community Rights](#),
[Carol Van Strum](#),
[Hwy 101 Pollinator Project](#).



Gretchen Dubie, Executive Director of View the Future, William (Moss) Webster chef extraordinaire and coastal wonder woman Willow Kasner are all smiles.



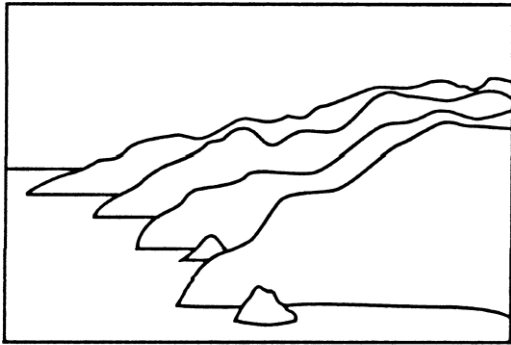
The food Moss prepared was over the top good! Several wholesome and savory dinner options were available. The dinner sold out. Many volunteers helped with the dinner.



Willow, Emy and Richie Scott, Director of Theater for the Wild, are all smiles. Thank you Richie and troupe for a skit with impact!



Naima Baker is a happy bee. Let's all bee for the forest.



COAST RANGE
ASSOCIATION

Support the CRA

You rely on the CRA to provide cutting edge analysis and practical solutions for our region's forests and communities. Help us continue with our advocacy for climate action, native forests and clean water. Make a donation [here](#) or mail a check to: PO Box 1001 Corvallis, OR 97339 Become a monthly donor.

Drift Creek Wilderness – Siuslaw National Forest

