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Comments: Forest Service,

Trust. Loss of Trust. When I interned for the US Forest Service as a graduate student at Lewis & Clark College I spent time in The Applegate Adaptive Management Area. In meetings between the USFS and the community relations were improved but those relations were not reflected in on-the-ground conditions. Trust was hard to find.

And here we are 30 years later seeking trust -- trust in the USFS practice of forestry. Professor Jerry Franklin has described Ecological Forestry in a way that not only protects mature and old growth trees but enhances the ecological health of the forest. Ecological Forestry can be trusted because it uses the best ecological science and is not deterred by market temptations.

The plan you have outlined for Land Management Plan Directions for Old Growth Forests is an "encouraging" plan. In language that promotes improvements and promises monitoring the plan sounds as if the USFS were practicing Ecological Forestry. But, trust is earned.

In the book "Money Trees - The Douglas Fir and American Forestry 1900 - 1944" the practice of forestry was all about making money, giving only lip service to the advancing science of ecology. The harvest of trees followed the market -- ecology be damned. Major environmental laws have passed since then, but still the practice of forestry has not put ecology and science first, but rather market conditions still have undue influence on the practice of forestry. The book "Finding the Mother Tree - discovering the wisdom of the forest" describes how advancing ecological science is again being hushed up by the desire to harvest trees young and old.

The two excerpts below are an example where the plan allows for harvesting -- a sort of wriggle room and where trust is paramount.

1. (in cases where it is determined that the direction in this amendment is not relevant or beneficial to a particular forest ecosystem type.)

2. (In granting an exception, the responsible official must include the rationale in a decision document.)

I hope the plan is not simply the papering over the practice of harvesting mature and old growth while markets

and profits prevail. A new ethic, a new type of forestry is needed. I hope this plan is reflected in the on-the-ground practice of Ecological Forestry.