



For Immediate Release  
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### **Litigation Against Douglas Complex Salvage Project Reveals Disregard for Rural Communities, Forest Rehabilitation**

On August 1, Cascadia Wildlands, Oregon Wild and the Center for Biological Diversity filed a lawsuit in Oregon federal district court to block salvage of timber from the Bureau of Land Management's Medford District resulting from the 2013 Douglas Complex fire claiming BLM and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are ignoring the needs of the northern spotted owl. On September 23, Magistrate Judge Thomas Coffin denied the environmental groups' request for a preliminary injunction, saying they were not likely to win their lawsuit because the agencies had considered the best available information and taken a hard look at the needs of the owl and appropriately balanced the various resource needs on the project area. Today, the environmental groups appealed Judge Coffin's ruling to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and are again seeking to stop the salvage of dead trees through a motion for injunction pending appeal.

Tom Partin, President of the American Forest Resource Council, issued the following statement regarding the efforts of environmental groups to litigate and halt salvage and reforestation efforts on the site of the 2013 Douglas Complex fires in Southwest Oregon:

"The preliminary injunction sought by Cascadia Wildlands, Oregon Wild, and Center for Biological Diversity reveals a deep disregard for the need to restore the forest following a devastating wildfire. The action undermines the work of federal agency officials, the Douglas Complex Recovery Coalition and other stakeholders to salvage dead timber, rehabilitate affected forests and help prevent catastrophic fires on the site in the future."

"Of the 10,630 acres of BLM forests that burned at a moderate to severe level, the agency is proposing only 1,276 acres for salvage harvest. That's only 12 percent of the available acres that the O&C Act has mandated for permanent timber production. The remaining 88 percent is being left untouched for ecological objectives advocated by the plaintiff environmental groups. In other words the BLM already gave the litigants nearly 90 percent of what they wanted. Meanwhile many in the affected communities, including emergency responders, continue to be deeply concerned about the sea of dead trees and excessive fuel loads on adjacent federal lands. Not only do these conditions pose a safety hazard to those working and recreating in the forests, the remaining snags could fuel the next big wildfire while leaving remaining trees more vulnerable to insects and disease."

“The Douglas Complex fires cost over \$51 million to contain, though some have estimated costs as high as \$500 million when local economic damages are factored. As damaged timber rapidly deteriorates, salvage work is desperately needed soon to support our local mills and workers. Yet in their appeal and motion for injunction pending appeal, extreme environmentalists have once again put their agenda ahead of people in rural Oregon. Their actions suggest they would rather see these lands reburn and threaten more human lives and wildlife, than allow these lands to be reforested and returned to productivity.”

“As Senator Wyden and the rest of the Oregon delegation continue their efforts to develop an effective, comprehensive solution to restore balance to the management of the O&C lands in Western Oregon, this latest lawsuit reminds us that any legislative solution must include reforms to the conflicting web of legal and administrative rules that these serial litigators frequently take advantage of to block common sense projects. Unfortunately, while the bipartisan House O&C legislation sponsored by Reps. DeFazio, Walden, and Schrader include such reforms, Senator Wyden’s O&C legislation largely maintains the status quo and actually creates new avenues for litigation.”