

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 13, 2006

Honorable Mike Johanns  
Secretary of Agriculture  
Room 200A  
Whitten Building  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Honorable Dale Bosworth  
Chief of the Forest Service  
Suite 4 NW  
Whitten Building  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

We are writing to criticize the continuing logging operations being conducted by the Forest Service in the Giant Sequoia National Monument (GSNM). The GSNM was created by presidential proclamation in April 2000 with the express purposes of ending logging and preserving the unique natural sequoia ecosystems in the area.

Using blatantly transparent excuses, such as non-existent "hazard-tree" threats, or supposed fire-reduction logging of giant, fire-resistant, centuries-old trees, the Forest Service has been conducting major logging operations in the GSNM. These logging operations are destroying the natural sequoia forest ecosystem of the GSNM, in direct violation of the spirit and the letter of the presidential proclamation creating the GSNM in 2000.

The Forest Service is clearly conducting these logging operations in the GSNM for the commercial gain of a small number of private logging interests, destroying the ecological values of the GSNM and the natural assets of the American people, and violating the public trust.

Further, the United States District Court for the Northern District of California, in response to a lawsuit brought by the Attorney General of California, found the Forest Service fire plan for the Giant Sequoia National Monument to be illegal, and the Forest Service withdrew it. This illegal fire plan is the basis of much of the logging that has occurred and the logging specified by the GSNM management plan.

Following is a short selection of instances of Forest Service violations of federal laws and regulations.

- Failing to consider or to properly evaluate new information and the impacts to the environment by arbitrarily extending the contract expiration date for the Burton Thinning Timber Sale, so 3.6 million board feet of trees could be removed from the Monument;

- Exempting a hazard tree removal project that removed more than 200 large trees from the *Trail of 100 Giants*, a high-profile showcase for giant sequoias, then arbitrarily including so-called “fuel reduction” activities that removed perhaps thousands of young trees in that project area without the National Environmental Policy Act requirements (“Reducing surface fuels” does not fall under the same category as “removal of hazard trees.”);
- Failing to follow the Forest Service’s own *Giant Sequoia National Monument Management Plan*, which requires that a ‘no tree removal’ alternative be studied and documented prior to determining that tree removal is the only feasible option;
- Ignoring the protective measures of the 1990 Mediated Settlement Agreement (MSA), which requires that inventories and scientific studies precede any significant entry into a sequoia grove;
- Failing to provide a legal Fire and Fuels Management Plan, as mandated by the 1988 Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) for Sequoia National Forest.

Chief of the Forest Service Dale Bosworth, in Congressional testimony before the House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee on March 9, 2006, gave incorrect answers about logging along the Trail of 100 Giants in the GSNM, in an attempt to justify the logging there. That logging has severely degraded the natural experience of persons visiting the Trail, which is a natural treasure – the very place where the Monument was proclaimed in April, 2000.

We therefore demand that the Forest Service comply with the intentions and the legal requirements of the GSNM proclamation, and that the Forest Service abide by the other environmental laws which govern the GSNM’s management. Moreover, we demand an end to logging operations in the GSNM.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_

Gett Slaw

Carolyn B. Maloy  
Hyd Doynt

Jane Hamm  
MSI sbp

Jim W. Ryan

Jim McDermott

Jimmy Baldwin

John W. Oler

Michael M. Hondo

Dennis J. Kucinich

Chris Van Hollen

Jim Moran

Max Baucus

Patrick J. Kennedy

Jan Schatz  
Betty McCollum

Grace E. Kapitan

Barbara Lee

Al Lewis

Edward J. Markey

Richard E. Shelby

Tom Harkin

Morris D. Hinkley

Sheila Jackson Lee

Alan D. Hartig

James P.

Albert R. Allen

Barry Bank

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Pete Stark \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Carolyn Maloney \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Jane Harman \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Lloyd Doggett \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Anna Eshoo \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ James McGovern \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Patrick Kennedy \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Jim McDermott \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Janice Schakowsky \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Tammy Baldwin \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Betty McCollum \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ John Olver \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Grace Napolitano \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Michael Honda \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Barbara Lee \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Dennis Kucinich \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ John Lewis \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Chris Van Hollen \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Edward Markey \_\_\_\_\_

Jim Moran

Richard Neal

Marty Meehan

Tom Lantos

Maurice Hinchey

John Conyers

Shelia Jackson Lee

Albert Wynn

Alcee Hastings

Barney Frank