

# *The Act to Save America's Forests of 2008*

(To be reintroduced late Spring-early Summer 2008)

## —Summary—

### **Title I:**

#### **Protection of Native Biodiversity, restricting clearcutting and similar destructive logging practices on Federal Forestlands**

**Protects and restores native biological diversity**—Maintaining native forest biodiversity will become the priority of federal forest management agencies on the National Forests, Bureau of Land Management lands, and Wildlife Refuges. The management agencies will be required to restore the native trees, plants and animals, either by active restoration projects or by letting natural processes such as natural succession take its course.

**Bans clearcutting and “even age” logging, and artificial tree farms on federal forestlands**—Allows limited amounts of ecologically compatible logging on previously logged lands, outside of the core areas of forest biodiversity. This will encourage the regrowth of natural, old-growth forest habitat, while restoring native species in areas previously degraded by clearcutting. Requires removal of non-native invasive tree species, which is necessary for restoration of native forest ecosystems.

### **Title II:**

#### **Protection of Core Forest Areas on Federal Lands**

**Northwest Ancient Forests, Eastside Cascade Ancient Forests, and Sierra Nevada Ancient Forests**—The *Act* prohibits logging and roadbuilding in scientifically mapped Ancient Forests in Washington, Oregon, and California, including sensitive riparian areas and key watersheds. This will permanently protect the habitat of endangered salmon, spotted owl, and other species being pushed towards extinction under current policies.

**Roadless Areas**—The *Act* prohibits logging and new road building in all roadless areas, both inventoried *and* uninventoried. Roadless areas form core reserves of biological diversity. Their protection from logging is critical to the full restoration of native biodiversity, and will ensure the survival of grizzly bear and other animals that need large, unbroken forest habitat.

**Watershed Protection Areas**—The *Act* prohibits logging and new road building within 300 feet of any permanently flowing stream or river, within 100 feet of any intermittent, ephemeral, or seasonal stream, within 300 feet of any natural lake or pond, and within 150 feet of any constructed lake, pond or reservoir, or natural or constructed wetland. This is vital for protecting trout and salmon fisheries and municipal drinking water supplies.

**Over 100 “Special Areas”**—In order to protect forest areas with important watersheds, old-growth forests, endangered species habitat, and other exceptional values, the *Act* prohibits logging and roadbuilding in over 100 named “special areas”. These special forest areas, many threatened with imminent logging, may have been previously roaded or logged, and therefore do not qualify for protection as roadless or Ancient Forests. The *Act* identifies “special areas” on national forests in 28 states around the country.

### **Title III: Giant Sequoia National Monument**

**Transfer of Jurisdiction of Giant Sequoia National Monument**—The *Act* provides for the transfer of jurisdiction of the Giant Sequoia National Monument from the Forest Service to the National Park Service. Adjustments are made to the boundaries and additions to the area encompassed by the Monument are made. An Advisory Board is appointed to assist in preparation of the management plan.

### **Title IV: National Park System New Area Studies**

**Reconnaissance Surveys** — The National Park Service shall conduct reconnaissance surveys of areas classified as “Level III Ecoregions of the Continental United States” by the EPA that are not represented or are inadequately represented ecologically by any unit of the National Park System, do not have adequate connectivity to ensure long-term conservation of their biodiversity.

**Purpose** — The Secretary shall conduct the reconnaissance surveys to determine if there are resources that possess national significance, to make a preliminary evaluation of the suitability and feasibility of their inclusion as units of the National Park System, and to recommend whether or not to proceed to a special resource study.

**Report to Congress** — the Secretary shall submit to the Congress a report containing the results of the reconnaissance surveys and any special resource studies carried out in response to the Secretary’s recommendations

### **Title V: Effective Date**

**Effective Date** — The Act and its amendments shall take place on the date of enactment of this Act.

**Wilderness Exclusion** — This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall not apply to any Federal Wilderness areas designated under the Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.).

**Endangered Species Act** — In the event of any conflict between a provision of this Act and the Endangered Species Act, the Endangered Species Act shall prevail.

### **Background**

More than 95% of America’s original forests have been cut down. The last 5%, found primarily on federal lands, is targeted for clearcutting by the timber industry and the U.S. Forest Service. Under current federal policy, America’s last natural forests continue to be converted into sterile tree farms or barren wastelands.

The survival of native species of plants, mammals, birds, fish, amphibians, and reptiles is dependent on banning logging and roadbuilding in core forest areas, and protecting and restoring large-scale forest ecosystems.

The *Act to Save America's Forests* is a comprehensive, nationwide, scientifically based plan. Passing the *Act* into law would permanently protect and restore the entire federal forest system, while providing ecologically sustainable forests and jobs.

The EPA Level III Ecoregion map reveal that nearly 50% of America's ecoregions are deficient in protected areas, threatening nearly ½ of America's ecoregion types with severe loss or even extinction. The Park Study/Ecoregion section provides a way to study, recommend and protect sufficient areas to ensure the survival of America's natural heritage in all ecoregions.

*Summary prepared by:*

*Save America's Forests  
4 Library Court, SE  
Washington, DC 20003  
202-544-9219*