

Carpenters support full funding of the Northwest Forest Plan

by Bend Weekly News Sources

The United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America (UBC) on Thursday applauded the decision to fully fund the Northwest Forest Plan as part of the President's Fiscal Year 2008 Budget request for the U.S. Forest Service.

"As someone who has been involved in local forestry issues for more than two decades, I can say it's time that Washington finally lives up to the promise it made to the people of forest communities of the Pacific Northwest back in 1994," said Michael V Draper, vice president, Western District of the UBC. "As part of the effort to save the northern spotted owl, President Clinton put into place the Northwest Forest Plan. Yet, while Washington worked to save the owl, it forgot its pledge to provide a reliable and sustainable supply of timber from the national forests. For many forest communities, the lack of supply has had devastating economic consequences, including the shuttering of mills and the collapse of once vibrant towns."

As part of the Administration's budget released earlier this week, it requested up to \$187.4 million to fund the Northwest Forest Plan. This would allow for a harvest level of 800 million board feet of timber from the 19 national forests in western Washington, western Oregon and northern California administered by the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management.

"This Administration has realized that working forests, as part of the Plan, are a win-win for the United States. In addition to providing receipts to the Treasury, they provide jobs, many of them good paying union jobs, in rural communities. This, in turn, means additional tax revenue to fund local government services and schools. In addition to these economic benefits, timber sales also support forest health and forest management programs that benefit all Americans who are concerned about these national treasures," added Draper. "It is now time for Congress, led by the Northwest's bipartisan Congressional delegation, to make sure this request becomes a reality."

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