



*Female Red-winged blackbird on Walton Lake.*

This sale is being rushed through as a “categorical exclusion” (CE) with no meaningful environmental analysis, and with special funding. A CE is not appropriate for this project. CEs are meant for small maintenance projects with negligible environmental impact, not for projects removing numerous old growth trees.



*Bee with flowers adjacent to Walton Lake. Logging is proposed adjacent to and in many areas around the lake.*

Logging is proposed adjacent to and in many areas around the lake. The Forest Service is using Laminated root rot as an excuse to log this old growth forest. Laminated root rot is a native fungus and a necessary natural disturbance agent that fulfills the valuable ecological roles of soil nutrient cycling and creation of large snags (standing dead trees) and down logs for wildlife, including species such as Pileated woodpeckers and Black bears. Root rot spreads very slowly, at a rate of approximately 30 cm per year, so this is not a case of root rot affecting the whole forest area.

## WALTON LAKE TIMBER SALE

The Walton Lake CE sale proposes to log old growth mixed-conifer forest in the most popular recreation area in the Ochoco National Forest. The area proposed for commercial logging is magnificent old growth forest with Ponderosa pines up to 61” diameter at breast height trees (dbh), Douglas firs up to 60” dbh, and Grand firs up to 57” dbh. This proposed 200 acre timber sale is an effort to get away with logging large old trees in a popular recreation area. It’s a violation of the Forest Plan’s Eastside screens to log live trees  $\geq 21$ ” dbh that are not officially defined as OSHA “hazard trees”, so this timber sale would violate the Forest Plan. The Forest Service is seeking to artificially convert this historic old growth mixed conifer forest to timber industry preferred tree species- Ponderosa pine and Western larch- by cutting down the big old fir trees and replanting with Ponderosa pine and Western larch instead.



*Mating damselflies along Walton Lake.*

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We field-checked areas proposed for commercial logging and found only three or four small areas of possible laminated root rot. These small patches were in areas that were more heavily logged in the past. Logging can spread and exacerbate root rot. Therefore more logging in root rot areas can make the situation worse rather than lessening the possible hazard of trees falling. Unless stumps and entire root systems of infected trees are excavated and the area is chemically treated- which is not a part of the Forest Service's stated plans- logging to control root rot is ineffective.



*Michelle with old growth fir stump—evidence that fir were historically present and should not be targeted for removal.*



*Bird's nest with eggs within the Walton Lake timber sale.*

We are very distressed by the Forest Service's proposal to log old growth mixed-conifer forests in this timber sale. We are also very concerned that the Forest Service is proposing this project as a CE, and attempting to circumvent the required environmental review and public processes normally conducted for projects that may have a significant impact on the environment. We are investigating our options for stopping this timber sale, and will continue to work to protect the old growth forests within this area.



*Karen with very large old growth Grand fir in a Walton Lake timber sale unit.*



*Michelle with old growth trees within the Walton Lake timber sale.*

Citations:

Bloomberg, W., 1988. Modeling Control Strategies for Laminated Root Rot in Managed Douglas-fir Stands. *Phytopathology* 78:403-409.

Hansen, E. and Goheen, E., 2000. *Phellinus weirii* and other native root pathogens as determinants of forest structure and process in Western North America. *Annu. Rev. Phytopathol.* 2000. 38:515–39.

Sturrock, R., Zeglen, S., and Turner, J. Laminated Root Rot Forest Health Stand Establishment Decision Aid. Sturrock, R., S. Zeglen, and J. Turner. 2006. British Columbia's coastal forests: Laminated root rot Forest Health. *BC Journal of Ecosystems and Management* 7(3):41–43.