



Keeping Northwest California wild since 1977

For Immediate Release: January 28, 2019

Federal Court Halts Illegal Logging in Sensitive Forests

Post-Fire Logging in the Siskiyou Crest Mountains would Degrade Water Quality and Irreparably Harm Wildlife Habitat

Contacts:

Tom Wheeler, Executive Director, Environmental Protection Information Center, 206-356-8689

Kimberly Baker, Executive Director, Klamath Forest Alliance, 707-834-8826

George Sexton, Conservation Director, KS Wild, 541-778-8120

Susan Jane Brown, Attorney, Western Environmental Law Center, 503-914-1223,

SACRAMENTO—Late Friday, Judge Troy L. Nunley halted plans for post-fire, clear-cut logging in northern California’s Klamath National Forest. The court held that the Seiad-Horse timber sale project would illegally and irreparably harm aquatic resources with increased sedimentation, violate the Northwest Forest Plan’s restrictions on large snag removal from a late-successional reserve, and violate the National Environmental Policy Act for failing to analyze the effects of the project.



“We wish the Klamath National Forest would join with stakeholders and communities to reduce fuels around homes and ranches in Siskiyou County rather than pushing an extreme backcountry clearcutting agenda,” said Susan Jane Brown of the Western Environmental Law Center. “This legal victory will halt destructive oldgrowth clearcutting in the backcountry while allowing strategic fuels work along roads and near private property.”

Following the 2018 Abney Fire, the Klamath National Forest authorized over 1,200 acres of clearcut “salvage” logging in the Seiad-Horse timber sale located within a protected “late successional reserve” that is not part of the timber base. While surrounding national forests focused on emergency wildfire recovery and hazardous fuels reduction efforts along strategic roadways and near homes and communities, the Klamath National Forest threw out the rulebook and proposed logging in botanical areas, inventoried roadless areas, late successional reserves, essential wildlife habitat, and streamside riparian zones.

Environmental Protection Information Center

145 G Street, Suite A, Arcata, CA 95521

(707) 822-7711

www.wildcalifornia.org

“We want to work with the Forest Service to thin dense second-growth timber plantations that exacerbate fire behavior,” said George Sexton, Conservation Director for KS Wild. “The Seiad-Horse timber sale would have increased fire hazard by removing old-growth forests and replacing them with dense tree farms. The court’s ruling protects wildlife, watersheds, and nearby communities from an egregious timber grab.”

“This is a win for Klamath River salmon and clean water” noted Kimberly Baker, Executive Director of the Klamath Forest Alliance “While this is a preliminary stage in the proceedings, we appreciate the court’s detailed and salient ruling.”

“For years the Klamath National Forest has ignored needed fuels work in the wildland urban interface zone while pursuing post-fire clearcutting in the backcountry. That ends now,” said Tom Wheeler, Executive Director of the Environmental Protection Information Center. “Let’s change course and all pull together to protect forests and communities.”

###