

This Land is Your Land

Helping to Save Jackson State Forest

Why Jackson State Forest Needs Our Help

The California Department of Forestry, CDF, is operating Jackson State Forest for its own benefit, rather than for the benefit of the people who own it -- us.

CDF has a legal responsibility to protect the public trust resources of Jackson State Forest. These resources include all parts of the forest that make up its ecology -- the many species of birds, animals, fish, trees and other plants. Unfortunately for the forest and the public, CDF cannot be relied upon to safeguard the resources of Jackson State Forest:

CDF not only writes, but reviews and approves the Timber Harvest Plans (THPs) for Jackson State Forest. Because the writer and reviewer are the same, there is no independent, unbiased review.

Even were it to try, CDF could not possibly provide an unbiased review of Timber Harvest Plans in Jackson State Forest. The money generated from the timber sales is too important to the Department of Forestry. CDF made \$56 million dollars above expenses during the last 10 years on Jackson State Forest timber sales. In 1993 alone, revenues were over \$15 million.

Only a small fraction of the revenues from the sale of timber goes to support CDF operations in Jackson State Forest. During the last 10 years, CDF spent 87 percent of the sale revenue on programs outside Jackson State Forest.

A primary use of Jackson timber-sale revenue is to underwrite the cost of CDF reviews of the Timber Harvest Plans of the big logging corporations. Jackson State Forest revenues also subsidize forest operations of private landowners, through the California Forest Improvement Program. What this means is our public forest is being liquidated to subsidize private timber owners.

Harvest policies attach highest priority to cutting old-growth trees, because they have the highest commercial value. Although a few small groves are excluded from cutting, old-growth trees distributed throughout the harvest areas are always marked for cutting. The aesthetic, ecological, recreational, and spiritual values of old-growth trees are ignored.

CDF routinely uses the herbicide Garlon within

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How We're Trying To Help the Forest

The Caspar Community and Watershed Association is a group of citizens working to improve the environmental, ecological, and recreational values of Jackson State Forest.

We are learning much about the forest and its problems as we work. Our actions respond to our growing understanding, as well as to the actions of CDF. But, our general course is set by a few important observations and beliefs:

Jackson State Forest should be managed for the benefit of the people of California.

Jackson State Forest is public land owned by the people of California. It is presently being managed by the California Department of Forestry as a logging operation. The profits from selling public trust resources are being used to subsidize private logging corporations and forest owners. This is wrong. The destruction of public forest for private profit should stop.

The 50,000 acre Jackson Demonstration State Forest is an irreplaceable asset that could provide great benefits to future generations of Californians. Public ownership of the State Forest provides a unique opportunity to save a redwood forest from the devastation occurring in the privately owned forests that surround it. Private forests are being cut to maximize the short-run profits of their owners, without regard to the environmental or ecological consequences.

Jackson State Forest has not been logged to the same extent as private lands, but logging is still the primary objective of management. Rather than being treated only as a source of logs, Jackson State Forest should be nurtured to preserve and increase its environmental, ecological, and recreational values.

There should be a moratorium on logging within Jackson State Forest until a thorough public review is completed of the purposes and management of the Forest.

The present management of Jackson State Forest is operating against the public interest. Stopping logging is urgent. The virgin stands of redwoods and most isolated old-growth trees have already been logged. The areas of older second-growth that have not been logged for many decades and remaining old-growth trees have the highest priority for near-term logging. To sustain revenues at high levels, increas-

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the Forest. In recent years, CDF sprayed Garlon over major clearcuts on the North Fork of Caspar Creek. It continues to spray along roadsides to kill scotch broom. A proposed Timber Harvest Plan for 928 acres along Caspar Creek initially proposed applying the herbicide Garlon to Eucalyptus trees growing throughout a 300+ acre area. CDF withdrew the use of Garlon after hundreds of letters and phone calls were received. CDF did not rule out the use of Garlon at a later date or in other parts of Jackson State Forest.

As shown by their use of herbicides, Jackson State Forest management has no heartfelt concern for the environment or the ecology of the Forest. In their Timber Harvest Plans, environmental laws and agencies are treated as adversaries. Their harvest plans attempt to push to (and often beyond) the limits of the legal restrictions on logging. Such an attitude is inappropriate for a guardian of our public land.

The stated objective of Jackson State Forest is to harvest all incremental growth, even though this conflicts with the law and Forest Board policies mandating that the forest be managed to achieve maximum sustainable yield. Managing for maximum sustainable yield implies no substantial logging of second growth, because the ages of most second growth redwoods in Jackson State Forest are far below the age at which maximum sustainable yield would be achieved. By cutting young second-growth trees, management is lowering the future productivity of the Forest. They are also violating the laws and Forest Board policies that mandate management for maximum sustainable yield.

Jackson State Forest does not have a current management plan for the forest. The last management plan was prepared in 1983. State law and Forest Board policies require that logging operations conform to a current management plan. In the absence of a current plan, all logging within the State Forest is illegal.

Your Help is Needed!

Our success depends on you. Please join CCWA. The more people we represent, the more that CDF will need to listen.

To join, send your name, mailing address, and phone number to:

**CCWA, P.O. Box 37, Caspar, CA 95420
(707) 964-6456**

Donations gratefully accepted!

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ing numbers of young trees are also being cut, lowering the future productivity of the forest.

Poisonous herbicides such as Garlon are being routinely used in the Forest, including spraying of hundreds of acres of clearcuts. Watersheds that provide habitat for the endangered coho salmon are being logged with little sensitivity to their importance.

Logging needs to be halted to reassess the management of the forest before its remaining timber, ecological and recreational values are further degraded.

Caspar Community and Watershed Association is not calling for a permanent halt to all logging in Jackson State Forest, but a temporary moratorium.

Our position is that the management of the forest needs to be revised in the light of the concerns of all parts of the public, including those whose livelihood is tied to logging. It would be premature to recommend specific policies. The first need is for a thorough assessment of the state of the Forest and the collection and evaluation of information and advice from all interested parties. The public should be active participants.

Management of Jackson State Forest needs to reflect the importance of the Forest to the Mendocino County community and environment.

The 50,000 acres of Jackson State Forest are a central part of the geography of Mendocino County. The western end of the Jackson Demonstration State Forest occupies much of the land between the communities of Fort Bragg and Mendocino. What happens within the Forest is important to all the people of Mendocino County, and especially those that live in Mendocino and Fort Bragg.

Jackson State Forest could be an important recreation area for both County residents and tourists. It is the only extensive redwood forest easily accessible to residents throughout Mendocino County. If recreation were assigned a higher priority, it could also become an added destination for the many visitors to the Mendocino coast.

Jackson State Forest spans watersheds of the Noyo River, Big River, Caspar Creek, and many smaller streams. The health of its watersheds directly affect the health of the local fishing industry.

Over the last thirty years, many people have moved to the Fort Bragg and Mendocino area. During the last 10 years, logging in the Forest has shifted from the lightly populated areas in the east to the heavily populated areas in the west. How the Forest is treated directly affects the quality of life in the coastal communities. Those responsible for Jackson State Forest need to recognize the importance of the Forest to those who live around it.

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How Goes the Timber Harvest?

Vince Taylor

Timber harvests are the major focus of the California Department of Forestry (CDF) staff of Jackson State Forest. Their management planning and their every day activities center on timber harvests. Typically, CDF put out four or five Timber Harvest Plans (THP's) each year. Each Plan is put out for bids to private timber companies, who do the actual logging in the Forest.

CDF attempts to sell trees each year equal to "the allowable cut" for the Forest. The allowable cut is specified in the management plan of the Forest, which is approved by the Board of Forestry.

Figure 1: Timber Harvest Volume

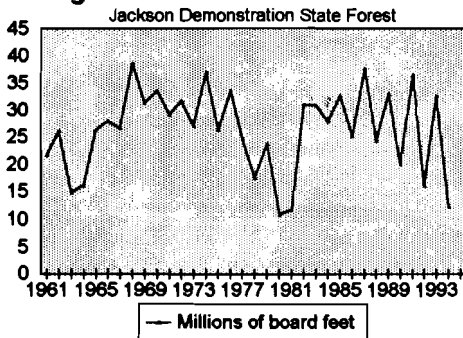


Figure 1 shows the annual amounts of timber harvested from Jackson State Forest for the period 1961-1994. Several features of the time trend are noteworthy.

- Harvest volumes increase from about 20 to 30 million board feet per acre between 1961 and 1968. This occurred because the plans for the two periods used different methods to determine the allowable cut.

The plan for the earlier period used a formula and assumptions that gave an allowable cut of about 20 million board feet per year.

Starting in 1964, the allowable cut was set equal to the estimated net growth of harvestable timber (27 million board feet). In 1968, the estimated net growth was raised to about 33 million board feet, and the allowable cut raised accordingly.

- All management plans since 1964 have set the allowable cut equal to the estimated net growth of harvestable timber.
- In 1976, the manager of Jackson State Forest, J. E. Sindel, made a request to his superior to reduce the annual cut to 26 million board feet per year. He stated, "...comparing [1974] growth figures with those of 1969, we find a decrease in average annual growth. This, we believe, is due to increased cutting in our second growth stands." He then argued,

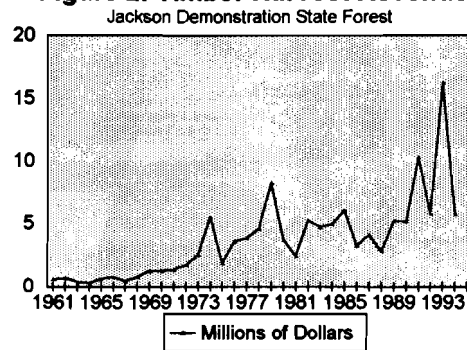
"Continued cutting of 28 to 30 million feet would decrease our growing stock to an even lower level resulting in continued decrease in average annual growth." In the event, harvest levels in the late 70's fell below the level requested.

- Since the beginning of the 1980's, measured growth and the allowable annual cut have been between 28.5 and 29.5 million board feet. In spite of the constancy of the allowable cut, actual harvests have fluctuated widely since 1985 and are on a declining trend.

Cutting the measured growth seems like a "neutral" management approach, which neither improves nor runs down the forest. In practice, however, this policy has caused a disproportionate number of older inherited trees to be cut, causing the average age of trees to fall.

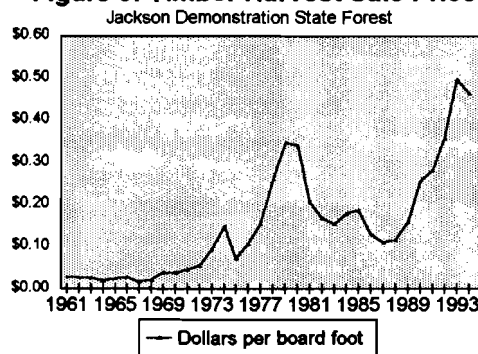
All of the current Timber Harvest Plans have a high concentration of 80+ year-old trees inherited from Caspar Lumber. As these older trees are exhausted, more and more of the annual cut will need to be of immature trees, pushing down the productivity of the forest. The declining trend of harvests of the past 10 years may reflect the declining availability of older trees.

Figure 2: Timber Harvest Revenue



Figures 2 and 3 show the value of the timber sold and the price received per board foot. Rising prices have caused the value of the timber sold to increase over time, even though the volume of sales has not increased.

Figure 3: Timber Harvest Sale Price



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Logging Plans Past and Future

When Jackson State Forest came under state ownership, in the late 1940's and early 1950's, the majority of the timber in the forest was old growth. Early logging plans concentrated on cutting the old growth trees, which were viewed as over-mature and unproductive. Most of these stands were in the eastern half of the forest, closer to Willits than to the coast.

In 1955, over 40 percent of the total timber in the forest was in old-growth stands. By 1965, the percentage of old growth had fallen to 16 percent. Still, the total old growth was 214 million board feet, enough to make a major contribution for many years to annual cuts of about 30 million board feet. The 1970 management plan stated, "Heavier emphasis will be placed on the removal of the old growth residual stands from the eastern third of the forest."

During the 1980's, logging shifted heavily toward cutting older second-growth trees as the old-growth residual trees were eliminated. Logging also shifted geographically from the east to the west, where Caspar Lumber Company had logged a century before. The

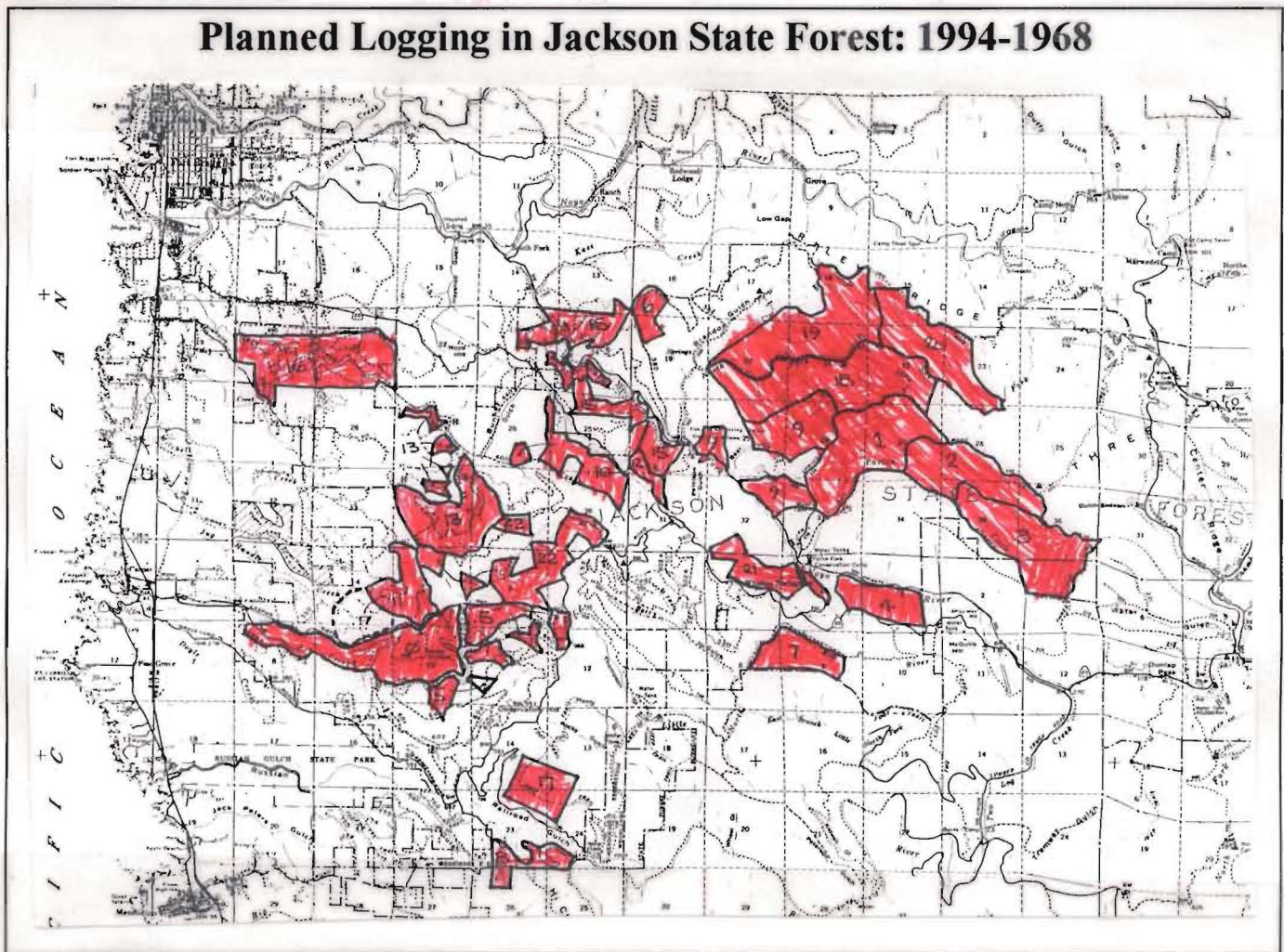
logging plans for 1983-92 were heavily concentrated in the Caspar Creek, Hare Creek, and Noyo River drainages.

The 1980's shift toward the west brought closer to home the meaning of logging in Jackson State Forest. Those in coastal communities that had used the forest for recreation for years, found their favorite spots devastated. Homeowners who had built along the edges of a beautiful redwood forest suddenly found themselves looking out onto clearcuts.

For those concerned with preserving recreational and ecological values in the forest that dominates the Mendocino coastal communities, the future only looks worse. There are no more old-growth to cut, and the "best" timber is still in the coastal watersheds. The 1994-98 cutting plan (see below) concentrates on Caspar Creek, Mitchell Creek, Hare Creek, and the Noyo River watersheds.

Jackson State Forest still contains beautiful areas that have not been logged for many decades. Under current policies, these are given the highest priority for logging.

Planned Logging in Jackson State Forest: 1994-1998



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