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(Dale, Oregon). Earlier this week, the District Ranger of the North Fork John Day Ranger District, Umatilla National Forest issued a one line statement pulling the Farley logging project in the face of objections from scientists. The Farley project proposed thousands of acres of logging in the rugged high elevation headwaters of the North Fork John Day River. The agency claimed it was restoring health to drier Ponderosa pine dominated forests at lower elevations, but it was mostly logging more complex moist and sub-alpine forests located at moderate to higher elevations. This landscape is home to the last best strongholds of wild fish in the interior, wildlife like wolves and goshawk and marked by steep roadless areas.

Karen Coulter, the executive director of the Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project (based in Fossil, Oregon), worked with a team of volunteer surveyors and two top scientists to field verify the project. Dr. Richard Waring surveyed the scene and submitted his declaration along with relevant scientific studies. Dr. Waring has worked cooperatively with various state and federal agencies for decades on ecosystem responses to climate and natural disturbance. He is one of the world's top scientists in ecosystems and has extensive knowledge about the plants that grow in these areas. Dr. Waring has worked for decades conducting field experiments and publishing scientific papers on the natural patterns of disturbance like wind, disease insects and fire on trees and forests. Dr. Waring offered to bring his expertise to bear and through his field review and knowledge of the key science, he pointed out statements directly counter to the Forest Service's claims in the Farley environmental impact statement regarding climate and insects. (Declaration of Dr. Waring attached)

Dr. Waring concluded that the Forest Service had the carbon balance wrong, and cited to studies by Mark Harmon and other top researchers demonstrating that logging, whether by clearcutting or by extensive landscape thinning, results in large carbon releases far more than any periodic natural disturbance like fire. His declaration underscored how the agency used fire as a scapegoat to go in and "treat" the area. Disturbance, whether by fires or insects, as the science shows helps recycle nutrients, restores the systems natural processes do the best job of storing carbon. The second significant shortcoming that Dr. Waring identified resulted from a gross oversimplification of the core question - how does building additional roads and landings and logging of the mature (future old growth) using a variable density (thinning approach) in remote moderate to high elevation interior forest increase forest resilience? During the last

administration, the Forest Service made it standard policy to conflate the scientific evidence and use the potential for some benefit from thinning lower elevation Ponderosa pine forests as an excuse to go in and thin the moderate and higher elevation lands dominated by moister mixed-conifer and sub-alpine environments. The goal was not forest health but using an excuse to obtain commercial logs. Dr. Waring's declaration underscored how the proposal was counterproductive.

Jonathan J. Rhodes, Planeto Azul Hydrological Consultants, looked at the vast increase in "temporary" and "rebuilt" roads, landings and the negative impacts these operations would have on the survival and recovery of wild fish. The definition and expansive use of the term "temporary" roads has in reality permitted more and more new roads to become existing roads - bringing weeds and damage from continued use. As Rhodes pointed out, even if the use of the road is temporary the negative effects from sediment bleeding into the stressed aquatic system is permanent. Rhodes submitted a cutting analysis on the claim of "fire risk reduction" and squarely presented the scientific dispute over the effectiveness of fire risk reduction "treatments" in these forests.

The Sierra Club Oregon Chapter's Asante Riverwind stated that: "I am very thankful for the work of the scientists who have shared their knowledge with our field staff and the agency. The science tells us where we can focus to get things done. To reach agreement on policy solutions, Oregonians must recognize that natural disturbance is healthy, not a reason to log. To build resilience as we face climate change, Oregonians need to protect the last remaining roadless areas 1,000 acres or greater, honestly account for the built road network and halt scientifically misguided logging of the few old growth trees, both live and dead, that remain on the land."

For additional information see the Oregon Chapter Juniper Group website: <http://oregon.sierraclub.org/groups/juniper/index.asp>
The Farley Appeal, scientists' declarations, and science exhibit list are available on the website.