

FRIENDS OF DOUGLAS-FIR NATIONAL MONUMENT

This is an irregular Dispatch, in that it is coming out sooner than usual, and because it contains only sad and bad news.

Dave Stone

First is a personal bit of sad news: Dave Stone, the long-time leader of the Friends of Douglas-Fir National Monument passed away March 16, 2026.

Many of you knew Dave. Indeed, nearly all of you knew about the Friends because you encountered Dave. While Dave did not originate the idea of a Douglas-Fir National Monument, very soon after it got started, Dave made the idea his own, and made the Friends what we are today.

Originally from the Midwest, Dave came to Oregon because he was interested in the outdoors. Once here, Dave had a career in environmental work. But I think that, other than his work on the Douglas-fir National Monument, Dave was most proud of his photography. In addition to taking lots of fine images of the outdoors, Dave led tours around the West, and taught classes in photography. Dave was proud of his students, and, I can say personally, never hesitated to take credit for every good picture his students took once they had finished a class with him.

Overlapping with his work on the Douglas-Fir National Monument, Dave was working on a series of educational displays about the Quartzville Creek corridor up to and after his MS conditions first forced him to step down as President of the Friends of Douglas-Fir National Monument, and then move to a nursing-home type assisted living. Alas, it was soon after Dave moved to hospice care that Dave passed.

I am sure that all of you who had the pleasure of knowing Dave will join me in hoping that we are able to someday soon see a Douglas-Fir National Monument. When we do, it will be in large part due to the efforts of Dave Stone.



Dave on the left, at the 2017 PIELC in Eugene

Tearing Apart Protections of Public Lands

While we are all being distracted by wars and renewed inflation and even debates about the Epstein files, the Trump administration has been quietly destroying in every way it can all institutional protections of our public lands. A recent Dispatch talked specifically about the ongoing efforts to change the Forest Service's Roadless Area Conservation Rule. (The Notice about that, and our ALERT asking you for a response now seems destined to come out some-time in April).

Today's discussion is prompted by two other, potentially disastrous, changes: First the gutting of the established limitations on logging on BLM land and, second, the just announced "reorganization" of the Forest Service.

The changes at BLM, especially combined with the logging quotas put into the "One Big Beautiful Bill" mean that the administrative restrictions on logging certain areas because of their scientific or natural importance will be gone. This means that the Crabtree Valley, with some of the oldest trees in Oregon, may now be on the cutting block.



The Trump administration has also just announced that it will be “reforming” the Forest Service. As they did with the BLM, the headquarters of the Forest Service is being moved out of Washington, DC, this time to Utah. All the regional offices of the Forest Service will be closed. The science division of the Forest Service will be ended. New state liaison offices will be opened.

Now no one who has been paying attention to the environmental deterioration of the United States, assisted in large part by our national government, could possibly regard the Forest Service as actual friends of the forests, or as friends of our public lands. But also anyone who has been paying attention would recognize that the Forest Service has many dedicated public servants, who have done their best to protect the forests within the serious limitations placed on them by laws passed at the behest of the logging and grazing industries. The science division of the Forest Service, for example, has done or supported much of the recent research that has refined our understanding of the place of fire in the forests, and helped understand the advantages of treatment other than clearcutting to forest management.

The career people of the Forest Service who understand the forests, and who have worked to adapt to science, and who have tried to include something besides logging in the idea of multiple uses are the ones who are the target of the reorganization. If they are not going to be fired outright, because their programs are eliminated, they will be faced with the challenge of moving from Washington DC, or wherever the regional offices now are, to new homes. Probably, as happened with the BLM, most of them will not move, but will seek new careers. They will be replaced with new hires, chosen by the environmentally unfriendly Trump administration, by the head of the Forest Service, who in former life was the head of a logging company.

This is not good.

Really, there only two things we can do: One is to tell everyone we know about this danger to our forests and urge them to take action. The second thing to do is to contact our representatives in the Senate and House of Representatives, and tell them how strongly we object to these changes. Ask them to do what they can, through hearings and public statements, to call attention to the issue, and to use the appropriations process to reverse the drastic changes. You can call the offices and leave a message. You can also send them an email message.

You can send a message to Senator Wyden ((202) 224-5244) at : <https://www.wyden.senate.gov/contact/email-ron>

You can send a message to Senator Merkley ((202) 224-3753) at: <https://www.merkley.senate.gov/connect/contact/>

You can send a message to Representative Bonamici ((202) 225-0855) (District 1 -part of Portland and west to the Coast) at <https://bonamici.house.gov/contact/email>

You can send a message to Representative Dexter ((202) 225-4811) (District 3 – part of Portland and east up the Columbia) at <https://dexter.house.gov/contact/email-me>

You can send a message to Representative Hoyle ((202) 225-6416) (District 4 – Eugene and south along the coast) at <https://hoyle.house.gov/contact/email-val?clear>

You can send a message to Representative Bynum ((202) 225-5711) (District 5 – just south of Portland south along the Willamette to Lane County and over the Cascades to include Bend) at https://bynum.house.gov/address_authentication?form=/contact/email-me

You can send a message to Representative Salinas (202-225-5643) (District 6 – south Portland suburbs along the west side of the Willamette to south of Salem) at <https://salinas.house.gov/how-can-we-help-you>

Please only contact your two US senators and your one US Representative. The latter in most particular have gateways on their websites that prevent messages to them from people who are not a constituent.

You can say something like:

I am writing to object to the moves by the BLM to increase logging, including logging in administratively protected areas. This puts at risk many critical and environmentally sensitive areas, including areas like the Crabtree Valley, home of some of Oregon's oldest trees. This will also end the critical carbon storage of these forests and endanger clean air and clean water. It will directly attack the watersheds that supply water for Oregon's largest cities, including Portland.

I am also writing to protest the planned destruction of the Forest Service by slashing many of its critical services and moving the headquarters to Utah. This move will mean the loss of experts and experienced personnel who have been managers of our public lands for the public good, not just for the timber companies. A serious reform of the Forest Service in light of the important role the forests play in combatting climate change would be great. Gutting the Forest Service and turning it over to those who only want to cut down every tree in the Forest is not the answer.

Please do all you can to call these atrocities to public attention and use the appropriations process to block all funds that might be used to implement these wrongful acts until the implications have been studied, debated, and voted on by the people's elected representatives. Don't dismember Smokey Bear!

Milo Mecham, President