

Packwood Supports Reforestation

To the Editor:

Several weeks ago, your papers spoke out to support aggressive reforestation of our National Forests. I applaud your support and assure you that your views are shared by many of us in Congress. To date, thirteen Western Senators have co-sponsored my bill, S. 100, to ensure a 100 percent commitment to reforestation.

Last month, however, I recall reading a letter to the editor from Mr. Bob Zybach of Eddyville, who argued that reforestation was a drain on the budget and that we should pursue a balanced budget rather than complain that Oregon does not get its fair share of the Federal tax dollar. With all due respect to Mr. Zybach, I maintain that Oregon and other timber-producing States should be reforested, and that we can accomplish this without injury to the budget. We must keep in mind that reforestation is a budget booster and not a budget buster.

For example, in 1976, the

total production costs from timber sales on the National Forests — including sales administration, timber stand improvement, nurseries and reforestation — was \$163 million. From those sales in 1976, we received \$419 million.

In 1977, we invested \$185 million, counting administration, salaries, road-building, tree-planting, everything in short. Our receipts from timber sales were \$652 million.

In 1978, for a total cost of \$208 million, we received \$723 million. For every single dollar invested, we're getting back a multi-fold return.

Sure it takes money to reforest. But it's not money thrown down a hole — it's an investment, in Oregon's economy and the nation's. Reforestation will preserve jobs, communities, recreation and wildlife values. Instead of asking whether we can afford it, let's ask ourselves whether we can afford not to reforest.

Cordially,
Bob Packwood
U.S. Senator

'Most Qualified Individual'

To the Editor:

Although I expected some feedback on my letter to your paper concerning your unsubstantial editorials and their relationship to the proposed reforestation budget (S.100), I was surprised that a reply was made by Sen. Packwood. I am very pleased that the senator, or one of his staff, takes the time to read local papers and reply to matters that are of interest to him. I think the senator and his staff should be commended for taking this extra effort, even though

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that effort did not extend to a thorough reading of my letter prior to writing a reply. Perhaps his letter was mainly a symbolic gesture of community involvement, meant to coincide with his visit to Newport this week and was meant to present his position on an important issue rather than to refute my arguments.

Basically, the crux of my position was two-fold and was clearly presented that way:

1) I felt that your editorial on reforestation was opinionated beyond a degree warranted by the facts. In addition, I implied a two-sidedness to your general editorial pattern, and,

2) I felt that requested budgetary increases were unnecessary to ensure good reforestation practices.

To fully qualify my second position it is necessary to point out the following: I have been a tree-planter since 1966, personally

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planting over 1½ million trees (3,700 acres); acres of planting, 3,000 acres of pre-commercial thinning, 1,000 acres of slashing and 1,000 acres of protecting planted seedlings by various means; my company, Phoenix Reforestation, is a member in good standing of both the Association of Oregon Loggers (AOL) and the Association of Reforestation Contractors (ARC), which keeps me constantly informed on most recent developments in this field.

When I state, as I did in my letter to your paper, "that the government has the ability with its present set-up to actually increase

reforestation practices while reducing its budget markedly," it is arguably possible that I am the most qualified individual in Lincoln County to make an assessment of that sort.

When I make the recommendation that Sen. Packwood and his cohorts investigate private forestry practices in order to see how government money can be spent more efficiently, it is a judgment made by a professional reforester, and reflects a reasonable opinion

made by someone with full access to the facts. After all, I am arguing against additional monies being spent in my own field of employment. In this instance, my concern as a taxpayer outweighs my avarice as a contractor viewing the potential for windfall profiteering in the next several years.

When Sen. Packwood lectures me on the value of reforestation practices, it is because he is unaware of my profession. When he (says) that my argument is that reforestation is a "drain on the budget" and "money thrown down a hole," it is because he is unaware of the content of my letter.

I share Sen. Packwood's apparent concern over reforesting our timberlands and am fully aware of the tax-generating employment that naturally emanates from this profession. However, in his use of my name as a pivotal step towards advertising his popular bill and drawing attention to his imminent presence, he did not accurately depict my own viewpoint.

Sincerely,
Bob Zybach
Eddyville

Wed., April 25, 1979