

made to retain the letter.

Deadline for

Don't Blame The Loggers

To The Editor:

Jeff Manning's articles on logging practices illustrate two popular misconceptions. The first is that rapacious white people didn't just show up and immediately start killing all the old growth Douglas fir. There wasn't very much here. Indians really did frequently set fires on purpose in order to ease transportation and encourage game animal populations. In the 10,000 or so years of human occupation here, several of those fires got out of control. Nature set many more. Without periodic, uniform destruction, Douglas fir has a difficult time reproducing as its seedlings cannot tolerate heavy shade. As a result we have the town of "Burnt Woods." We also have the first survey records of Eddyville describing the area as steep hills covered with "cherry brush."

The second misconception is illustrated by the article's sentence: "When virtually every square inch of land played host to vegetation, most of it Douglas fir and other coniferous species, erosion wasn't a problem." This sentence would accurately describe the county in 1983 and also for the foreseeable future. The bedrock of Lincoln County is sedimentary (the product of erosion) and volcanic rocks about five miles thick. This stuff erodes quickly (geologically speaking) and is why silt deposits on Lincoln County stream beds are measured in feet and why we have beaches.

Loggers didn't invent erosion. Maybe it's time for commercial fishermen, sports fishermen and people who use electricity to begin accepting the bulk of the blame for depleted salmon runs.

At least 60 percent of Lincoln County contains some of the world's very finest forest soils. About 1/2 of these are socially owned and publicly managed. One of the primary precepts of public management is that it be done so as to economically benefit local communities. Why haven't local communities had input into long term management plans? Is it because they are uninformed or because they are given erroneous information? Whose job is it to inform the public? A comparison of initial survey records and current timber inventory records for Lincoln County would undoubtedly startle many preservationists. Because timber plays such an important part in Lincoln

County's economic and ecological future, I would like to greatly encourage your newspaper to increase your coverage of it, without allowing yourself to be further manipulated by the special interest groups. Before accepting quotations such as: "the large producer of coho in the Umpqua Basin has been destroyed" as fact, how about posing some questions. Is "destroyed" meant literally, or is it just another of the hysterical verbs routinely used by special interest preservationists? How many fish did it produce in the past 20 years. How many projected for the next 20? Were the slides caused by logging? If so, how? Is this the first time Schofield Creek has been logged? If not, what happened last time, when harvesting practices caused far more problems than they do today?

Bob Zybach
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