

WILDERNESS CONTROVERSY

Last year a coalition of Democratic representatives led by Jim Weaver introduced a resolution (HR 1149) into Congress that recommended increasing Oregon's wilderness holdings over 1,000,000 additional acres. Many of the proposed additions included some of this nation's most productive timberlands. In a March, 1983 Board meeting the ARC Board of Directors unanimously supported a resolution to oppose HR 1149 as being excessive and detrimental to the economy of the state. A result of this resolution was that a letter was sent to Senators Hatfield and Packwood informing them of our position. Both Senators replied immediately, with Senator Hatfield soliciting more specific comments for his field hearings. The following statement was drafted following last August's annual ARC meeting and was presented to Senator Hatfield's committee on August 25.

HEARING ON HR 1149 BEFORE THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS AND RESERVED WATER OF THE SENATE ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF ASSOCIATED REFORESTATION CONTRACTORS, INC.

Salem, Oregon
August 25, 1983

Dear Senator Hatfield
and Members of the Committee:

In a letter to your office dated March 30, 1983 I outlined the Associated Reforestation Contractors, Inc. unanimous opposition to HR 1149 as well as some of the points of discussion concerning that bill. In your April 25th reply you requested "any particular comments" that we might have. Copies of those letters are included with this statement to provide a background to the following commentary:

During our annual membership meeting held this year on August 19 at the Agate Beach Hilton, I made a formal presentation concerning the wilderness issue in general, our board's position on HR 1149 and the basic reasoning involved in adopting that position. Following an outline of six other wilderness proposals, the floor was opened to discussion concerning any specific comments our organization might make to this hearing. The following points were discussed without attracting dissenting viewpoints:

Any proposed additions to existing wilderness should allow for labor intensive management. Specific mention was made for fire control, trail maintenance and insect control through salvage harvesting.

The proponents of additional wilderness form a very small, vocal minority. Actual users of wilderness form a small minority of the proponents. It was felt that these individuals should not be allowed an influence exceeding

their numbers and that greater consideration should be given to the original agreements by which Oregon lands were first placed under Federal management; in particular the issues of community stability and revenue sharing.

In any instance, the issue should be settled as quickly as practical.

Points of discussion that attracted *opposing* or *questioning* viewpoints were:

Commercial grade timberland should not be considered "wilderness," but rather as Oregon's most valuable crop land. It was argued that Oregonian workers and property tax payers would be, in effect, subsidizing "wilderness" involving crop lands through job loss and harvest profit loss.

Eastern and Southern States should be expected to provide similar amounts of wilderness to those already existing in Oregon before expecting this state to further encourage this unpopular form of land management.

A conclusion was reached that the ARC, through time and financial limitations, should not develop its own proposals, but rather, should support the existing proposals that most nearly paralleled the views of our members.

During the evening business meeting, following the election of new officers and board members and the formation of trade committees, the position of the new board concerning the wilderness issue was discussed. It was decided to support one of the following proposals:

1. The Regional Forester's Proposal
2. The January, 1979 Final Environmental Statement
3. The Carter Administration Proposal
4. Governor Atiyeh's 1979 Proposal
5. Senator Hatfield's S. 2031 Proposal
6. The AOL January, 1982 Proposal
7. HR 1149

Serious consideration was given only to the Atiyeh, Hatfield and AOL positions. It quickly became apparent that the majority of those present considered the AOL proposal as best representing the concerns of our organization.

As a result, the Board of the Associated Reforestation Contractors, Inc. voted unanimously to enter a statement to this hearing fully supporting the Associated Oregon Loggers 1982 Wilderness Proposal.

Respectfully Submitted By,
Bob Zybach, Vice-President
Associated Reforestation Contractors

