

The Honorable Thomas Vilsack  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Suite 200-A  
Washington DC 20250

December 13, 2010

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

Sweeping new National Forest management rules set to be released by the Obama administration in early 2011 provide a unique opportunity to continue the conservation legacy of President Theodore Roosevelt, who had the foresight to protect these treasured lands more than a century ago. Because of this vision, America enjoys 193 million acres of National Forests and grasslands -- including nearly 16 million acres in Oregon. These public lands provide vital protection for fish and wildlife, unique recreational opportunities, and clean drinking water for millions of Americans and nearly 80% of Oregonians.

Today, our National Forests and the wildlife and water resources they support, including those in Oregon, face unprecedented threats that even a visionary leader such as Roosevelt could not have anticipated. Our forests, wildlife and watersheds, which require comprehensive restoration to remedy the effects of mismanagement, also face new challenges associated with climate change and encroaching development.

The new National Forest Management Act regulations must effectively protect and restore our national forests as we face the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They must serve to anchor Forest Service management by giving the agency clear non-discretionary direction, as they are under current regulations. At the same time, the new regulations must use the best available science to safeguard healthy fish and wildlife populations and their habitats, and secure safe, clean water by creating management standards to protect and restore streams, rivers, and watersheds.

The development of these comprehensive National Forest management rules are one of the most important environmental actions that the administration will take during this term and one of the most enduring legacies it will leave behind. The course set by these critical rules will determine the future of our forests, wildlife, and watersheds for generations to come.

We look forward to working with you to develop a new framework for managing our National Forests in this century of which President Roosevelt would be proud.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Pedery". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Steve Pedery  
Conservation Director  
Oregon Wild

Signing on behalf of:

### **Conservation Leaders**

Brent Fenty  
Executive Director  
Oregon Natural Desert  
Association (ONDA)

Cindy Haws  
Executive Director  
Umpqua Watersheds

Josh Laughlin  
Campaign Director  
Cascadia Wildlands

David Mildrexler  
Ecosystem Conservation  
Coordinator  
Hells Canyon Preservation  
Council (HCPC)

Russ Pascoe  
Conservation Chair  
Oregon Kayak & Canoe Club

George Sexton  
Conservation Director  
Klamath Siskiyou Wildlands  
Center (KS-Wild)

Meredith Shield  
Legislative Director  
Oregon League of  
Conservation Directors  
(OLCV)

Dave Willis  
Chair  
Soda Mountain Wilderness  
Council

### **Elected Leaders**

Chris Garrett  
State Representative  
District 38

Rob Handy  
County Commissioner  
Lane County

Rod Monroe  
State Senator  
District 24

Bill Morrisette  
State Senator  
District 6

Tobias Read  
State Representative  
District 27

Pete Sorenson  
County Commissioner  
Lane County

Carolyn Tomei  
State Representative  
District 41

Barbara Willer  
County Commissioner  
Multnomah County

### **Other Leaders**

Wayne Hill  
Methodist Minister (retired)  
Oregon City, OR

The Reverend Julie Jensen  
St. John the Baptist Episcopal  
Portland, OR

Patrick Kruse  
Founder  
Ruff Wear, Inc.

Jim Leeman  
Redwood Friends Church

Pastor Peg Pfab  
Southminster Presbyterian  
Beaverton, OR