

Dear Mendocino Board of Supervisors,

We have a very serious problem here in Caspar that has recently come to our attention. There have been several massive timber harvest plans filed by Jackson State Forest that will substantially close all access to our forest for three to five years, decimate our trails, threaten our water shed and basically destroy the natural habitat of the very Western edge of the forest directly adjacent to our community.

This is more than disturbing. It is a threat to our very way of life. It will severely damage tourism, income from tourism and threaten our water source. Besides, we depend on this forest and it is a major factor in our quality of life.

I encourage you to read my letter to Jackson State Forest officials which I have attached above. My letter was just one of many sent by concerned residents.

We found out on the very last day that Jackson State Forest folks were reluctantly taking public input. Public input was not adequately advertised, (not really advertised at all), and it was by accident any of us found out about it.

There is some sneaky, I dare say underhanded tactics occurring that are not in keeping with what we expect from our forestry officials.

We desperately need your input and assistance in this matter. There are MANY of us. Please help.

I am yours with respect,

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Dear Joy, and Jackson State Forestry Officials,

I have lived, raised a family and run a business in the Caspar area over the last fifty years. I have also worked in the woods for logging companies. So I begin this letter by stating that I am not against responsible harvesting of timber.

That said, I must say that times are much different now then when the guide lines were set up for the Jackson State (so called “demonstration”) forest.

When the West end of the forest was last logged, the forest was basically decimated. There were not many people living in the area then, although, even then, there was quite an outcry against the destruction that occurred, which was ignored by forest officials.

Now there are a lot of folks living in the area and many folks that come from outside the area that love to recreate in the Jackson State Forest and depend on its sanctuary and beauty. It has actually become a ‘hotspot’ for so called “eco tourism”.

It has taken many, many years for the forest to recover from being logged to its current state of health.

I realize there is no mandate in the Jackson Demonstration Forest guide lines for recreation. There is ‘lip service’ given but that is about all.

They call the forest “multiple use” but what the guidelines demand are logging, logging and more logging. In this modern age, this sort of policy towards our forest is simply not responsible.

There is a very large movement afoot in the community insisting that, at least, the West end of the forest be maintained for its beauty and as a resource for recreation and habitat for wild life.

It has taken a long, long time for the forest to regenerate to its current state of health and beauty.

But this state of health is extremely fragile. Logging at this time will set the forest back for at least a generation or more. And it is really not certain it will ever be able to recover to its current state.

If this area is logged, I know I and many others will never live to enjoy the beauty and balance it has achieved in the last fifty years. Oh I know, we are told “the trails will be restored” and this and that and “don’t worry it will be fine”. NOT TRUE! I know from experience and observation of the forest for half a century that this is impossible. Frankly, considering the state of climate change and the ever decreasing rain fall, it is certainly quite possible that if the forest is logged yet again, that it will simply NEVER return to its current state of health, beauty and balance.

I strongly believe that if this logging and decimation of the forest is allowed to proceed, and if there is not a mandate put in place for recreation and preservation of habitat, that it will be a shameful example of forest “management” done with disregard for anything other than plumping up the

“bottom line”. It will certainly go down in history as a BIG and very SERIOUS MISTAKE made by the folks in charge who are paid by the public to attend to the welfare of our Jackson State Forest .

Then there is the issue of WATER. We who live adjacent to the forest depend on shallow wells for our water supply. Already we have all suffered from water shortages in dry years. And all the climate models point to the occurrence of ever more dry years to come.

The way our forest, our water shed, holds moisture is extremely complex, delicate and fragile. With the logging, removal and destruction of a large percentage of the flora that holds that moisture, and the unpreventable

rough shod trampling of heavy equipment over the water shed, it is certain that we in Caspar will suffer ever more shortages of water. Many wells may simply go dry.

These are new and difficult times we live in with many challenges. I expect you are all good people who have gotten into forestry because of your love of the forest and not just because you want profits from timber harvesting. I strongly urge you to reconsider this serious blunder of destroying a special area of our forest for the short term profit it would bring.

There are many, many acres of Jackson State Forest that do not lie close to town that are more appropriate for timber harvest.

If you really want to do your job honorably, I implore you: stick your neck out there and actually MANAGE our forest. Please don't just go along with a long outdated list of mandates that do not have anything to do with the current state of things in our world.

Thank you very much for your serious consideration of this extremely serious matter.

I am respectfully and humbly yours,

Gene Parsons

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