

Jackson State Forest (JSF) contains ~43,000 acres; of that, about 1-2% is harvested annually. JSF is the only cash-flow positive State Forest with 100% of the income generated going into the State Forest System for management of state timber land. Jackson State Forest is an excellent example of self-supporting, productive timber land which pays for road systems, stream protection and offers public use in the form of mushroom gathering, firewood collection, a trail system and camping.

JSF has been managed for recreation, jobs and timber management since it was acquired in 1947. It operates with an Advisory Board made up of Registered Professional foresters, wildlife experts and recreation specialists. Now, because of timber harvests adjoining private property, it is being tarred and feathered as if it were Weyerhaeuser. The protestors have created dramatic media postings with photographs of Oregon clear-cuts and they claim to be photos of timber operations in JSF. The protestors are recommending all timber harvests be banned from the State Forest and the property turned over to Native American tribes, the State Park system or some other entity for management. Imagine what will become of the State Forest without active land management: culverts will blow out causing siltation of streams, downed trees will block roads limiting public access, and campgrounds will close due to a lack of funding for maintenance. Walked around the boardwalk at Mackerricher lately? No one can because it's been closed for years due to no State Park funding. The JSF is available to the public because it is self-supporting.

The recent activism stemmed from timber plans which abutted private land. The adjacent private land owners were sent notification of proposed timber operations but they failed to comment until operations actually started...long after the public comment period ended. JSF has tried to respond reasonably to the protests by "unmarking" some of the larger trees which initially sparked the protests...but that was not enough. The protestors took it upon themselves to enter active logging operations endangering themselves and licensed timber operators. Many trespass confrontations resulted in work stoppages. Truck drivers trying to haul out stacked logs were prevented from accessing log decks because protestors blocked roadways. Protestors overran JSF advisory board meetings shouting down members trying to have a productive dialog. The JSF protest has morphed into an outright overthrow of State-owned lands for the benefit of a few adjacent land owners. Now protestors want the entire State Forest shut down and set aside as a wilderness with no active land or timber management; a great benefit to them but not the rest of the California.

Please don't shut down Jackson State Forest. There is no need for a one year hiatus on timber harvests which impact a 1-2% JSF land. Please don't bend to the loud, unreasonable voices of those with special interest in protecting their own back yard but with no plan or realistic financial base to manage the forest for the greater public good. Shutting down the State Forest will bring an end to cash flow needed to maintain and develop the infrastructure for all to enjoy this beautiful and vast forest.

Sincerely,
Maryellen Sheppard