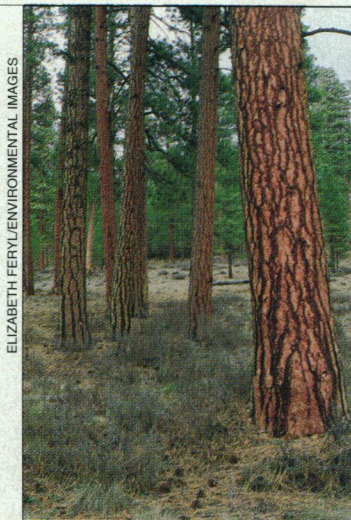


edited by RICHARD STONE

## Can Logging Save Old-Growth Forests?

No sooner has the Administration put out one fire in forest management than another threatens to ignite. The latest crisis involves a much wider terrain than the one that caused the furor over the spotted owl.

Last July, President Clinton proposed a logging plan that he said would save the northern spotted owl and protect logging jobs in the Pacific Northwest. But many scientists argue that his solution left the job half done. While Clinton's plan focussed on preserving old-growth forests west of the Cascade Mountains in Washington and Oregon, it ignored similar terrain in the eastern portion of the states. This area, warns one scientist, is "primed for a catastrophe"—one that may only be averted by increasing certain kinds of logging.



ELIZABETH FERYL/ENVIRONMENTAL IMAGES

**Fire hazard?** Ecologists favor some logging east of the Cascades.

Like their western analogs, "eastside" forests are home to several threatened or endangered species, including the northern spotted owl, the white-headed woodpecker, and the bald eagle.

Eastside forests have been logged less heavily than those to the west; this and other factors have led to dangerous accumulations of dead trees and other fire fuel, says David Perry, a forest ecologist at Oregon State University.

Last month, six scientific societies released a report requested by Congress on how to protect eastside forests. The panel sent a mixed message to Congress and the timber industry: It recommended several types of logging restrictions, but also suggested that salvage logging—a controversial practice of removing dead wood (*Science*, 16 July, p. 287)—may be in order on the eastside and called for another panel to study this idea. In this case, "we can't just draw a line around a pristine forest and walk away," says one federal forest scientist.

Congress is gearing up for possible hearings later this fall.

## Stewart and Feder Report for Desk Duty

After 4 months shopping for a more congenial boss, Walter Stewart and Ned Feder—the self-appointed fraud detectives of the National Institutes of Health (NIH)—rejoined the ranks of the regular NIH staff this week. The duo has grudgingly agreed to desist from scientific misconduct investigations—while on company time, that is.

Until this year, Stewart and Feder were assigned to conduct neurological research at NIH, although in fact they led decidedly different lives. For a decade they ran a detective shop out of their lab, investigating charges of scientific misconduct involving people such as Nobel Prize-winning microbiologist David Baltimore. Then in April, agency officials shut down their operation and seized their files after the fraud-busters' investigation into the words of historian Stephen Oates became widely publicized (*Science*, 16 April, p. 288).

Stewart and Feder had hoped to continue gumshoeing: They were angling for a deal in which they would have received full pay from NIH while being supervised by academics at the University of Illinois. NIH agreed in principle to the deal during the summer; but on 14 September, NIH deputy general counsel Michael Wald told Stewart and Feder they'd have to move to Illinois. Wald also stipulated that they must agree not to "spend any of their official time investigating allegations of scientific misconduct involving specific individuals."

Stewart balked at this, he says, because he didn't want to relocate his wife and four young children for a temporary job or leave his wife to manage on her own.

The duo reported for work on Monday, 27 September—Stewart to a protein-folding project under William Eaton, and Feder to a grants administration job. Stewart says they will continue to assist misconduct whistleblowers, although now they must do so outside of office hours.

## Ninth Circuit Denies 'Scholar's Privilege'

As early as next week, the Supreme Court may decide if it will hear arguments on whether the First Amendment guarantees a "scholar's privilege" against forced testimony in criminal cases—similar to the privilege claimed by journalists who refuse to answer questions about their sources.

A petition for review on this issue has been filed on behalf of Ric Scarce, a Ph.D. candidate in sociology at Washington State University in Spokane. Scarce is in jail in Spokane for refusing to cooperate with a federal inquiry into a break-in by animal rights activists (*Science*, 16 July, p. 285).

Scarce has refused to answer questions about a friend, Rodney Coronado, who was indicted by a grand jury and charged with destroying an animal research lab. Scarce claims that Coronado, who has since disappeared, is not just a friend but a source of confidential information for Scarce's sociological research. However, the U.S. District Court for Eastern Washington rejected this argument, as did the Ninth Circuit Court of

Appeals, which handed down a strong opinion against Scarce on 17 September. The Circuit Court assumed for argument's sake that Scarce has the same rights as a journalist and concluded: "Under the circumstances presented by this case, the privilege to which Scarce lays claim...does not exist."

This ruling, if the Supreme Court declines to review it, could

deny any confidentiality privilege in the Ninth Circuit's West Coast jurisdiction for scholars in criminal cases. But San Francisco attorney Michael Traynor, a scholar's-rights expert, notes the ruling is "fairly narrow" in that it doesn't affect civil suits—in which forced testimony often is a problem for scholars compelled to serve as expert witnesses.

## Fiber Glass, NTP on Trial Next Week

Insulation manufacturers and installers will be keeping a close eye on a scientific meeting to be held in Bethesda next week. The issue: Does airborne fiber glass cause cancer? The National Toxicology Program (NTP) says glass wool "may reasonably be anticipated to be a carcinogen" and wants to list it as such in a reference book that many state agencies refer to in crafting regulations. But the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), NTP's parent agency, has asked NTP to reexamine the data on glass wool, as well as evaluate the criteria the program uses to classify substances as carcinogens. An NTP scientific panel will meet next week to comply with HHS's request.

Last November NTP proposed to list glass wool in its Seventh Annual Report on Carcinogens, based on studies in which rats developed tumors after being injected with glass wool. The North American Insulation Manufacturers Association (NAIMA) cried foul, contending these data have been superseded by what NAIMA claims are recent, better-designed studies in which rats inhaled glass wool but did not have significantly higher cancer rates than controls. NAIMA petitioned HHS to defer listing glass wool; HHS responded by asking NTP to convene a special review panel, headed by NTP's Bill Jameson, which will also evaluate whether NTP's listing criteria need to be updated.