



ECHO Fund: Prevent the Proposed Clear-Cutting of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule

Proposed changes to the Roadless Area Conservation Rule ignore the incredible support for Roadless lands and effectively dismantle the protections designed to prevent the degradation of plant and wildlife habitats, watersheds and the many other undeveloped natural resources and recreational regions.

Antioch, CA ([PRWEB](#)) October 7, 2004 -- Essential to protecting habitats, watersheds and wildlife, the popular Roadless Area Conservation Rule (2001) garnered support via 2 million comments and more than 600 public hearings. However, on July 16, 2004 the administration decided to ignore the overwhelming public support for roadless areas and put the 58.5 million acres of national forests, currently protected by the 2001 ruling, at risk from commercial development.

Effectively undermining the nationwide prohibitions limiting timber harvest, road construction and oil and gas development, the administration's proposal replaces the current protections in favor of a state petition process and eliminates the blanket protections designed to prevent the degradation of plant and wildlife habitats, watersheds and the many other undeveloped natural resources and recreational regions. The petition system places protection and/or developmental decisions in the hands of governors who lack forest management expertise and forces them to petition for roadless area protection in their state. If governors do not take action, the once protected open spaces would be quite vulnerable to the harmful effects of industrial development. Governors in timber and energy rich states who indicated possible support for the harvesting of timber and the exploration and development of oil and gas in national forests would be less likely to petition the Forest Service to designate lands off limits, and, as a result, would be subject to the lobbying efforts of commercial industries.

The success of the 2001 Rule demonstrated that a federal policy to manage national land is appropriate and responsible. ECHO Fund believes the protection of our Roadless areas is a responsibility that need not be in the hands of Governors without forest management expertise or in the reach of timber and energy industries. Let the administration know how important protecting roadless areas are to you and send a comment opposing the proposed changes to the U.S. Forest Service.

Visit <http://www.echofund.org> for more information and to respond to this call for action. The U.S. Forest Service will accept public comments until November 15, 2004.

ECHO Fund is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the education of individuals on the necessity of conservation while advocating and working for the preservation of plants, animals, and their natural communities for an ecologically sound future. ECHO Fund strives to make a positive difference not only in the preservation and conservation of wildlife and habitats through direct action, but in the attitudes of our communities through educational programs.

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