

Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC)
American Lands Alliance

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Pacific Lumber Blessed by Timber Industry Greenwashing Program

SFI “Certification” of Pacific Lumber Reveals Program’s Weak Environmental Standards

GARBERVILLE, CA -- On Wednesday, the Pacific Lumber Co. announced it had been blessed by the American Forest & Paper Assn’s “Sustainable Forestry Initiative” (SFI). Conservationists questioned Pacific Lumber’s claims of sustainability, saying it reveals SFI to be little more than “greenwashing.” “To call Pacific Lumber’s ongoing liquidation of ancient forests “sustainable” exposes the self-serving nature of this program” commented Paul Mason of the Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC).

Pacific Lumber (PL) has been embroiled in controversy since its takeover by Maxxam Corporation in the mid-1980’s. Shortly thereafter, PL began logging the Headwaters Forest’s renowned old growth redwoods. In March of 1999, PL completed the “Headwaters Deal” and received a Habitat Conservation Plan and Sustained Yield Plan. Unfortunately, the plans authorize the company to harm endangered species and continue liquidating over 10,000 acres of ancient forest over the next couple years. The relatively-protective interim standards governing the company’s logging near streams are also currently being rewritten through a controversial “Watershed Analysis” process of dubious scientific merit. So far, the Watershed process has excluded public participation, ignored independent scientists, and has been used as justification to weaken protections and allow more logging near streams and on landslide prone slopes.

Pacific Lumber’s Sustained Yield Plan is currently being challenged in court by EPIC and the Sierra Club. The United Steelworkers of America are also challenging the plan because of its likely adverse effects on the economic stability of the area and the stability of the workforce.

“There are highly credible certification programs out there; the industry’s SFI program isn’t among them,” said American Lands’ Daniel Hall. “SFI really just represents the ‘Same old Forest Industry.’” “Consumers should be aware that AF&PA’s SFI is far from independent, fails to protect the environment, and is not a credible certification system,” continued Mr. Hall. “Pacific Lumber’s compliance isn’t the real issue -- virtually any timber company could meet SFI’s vague parameters.”

Indeed, the AF&PA considers all member companies to be in compliance with the SFI standards. According to Mr. Hall, the SFI system’s standards and procedures are fundamentally inadequate,

and many other AF&PA companies are also harming endangered forests, wildlife, and environmental quality, are disregarding workers' and indigenous peoples rights, and are not managing their forests sustainably.

Additional information is available at: www.wildcalifornia.org and www.americanlands.org/forestweb/SFI.htm

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