When writing a letter to the Forest Service about Juncrock, remember these points:

• The Forest Service's justification for logging in the Juncrock area:

> Many stands of trees have high levels of insect and disease in the mature trees, lack a healthy understory to replace the mature trees over time, have high fuel loadings that increase the risk of catastrophic wildfire, and/or are made up of a mix of tree species that are highly susceptible to insect and disease. The current condition in about 1/6, or 18 % of the forest stands in the area is expected to substantially reduce their ability to sustain a healthy forest habitat in over the next 20 years. The purpose of this project is to 1) maintain and develop mature forest stands, reduce susceptibility to insect and disease, and 2) reduce and manage the road system to meet resource, public, and management needs[i]

Facts: A good response to this statement is that tree disease, along with many other processes, is a natural part of a forest progression called a "disturbance process". Disturbance processes are a healthy and needed part of forests everywhere. Evidence is beginning to show that disturbance processes increase biodiversity by creating conditions in which many species can exist. A statement by Dr. Arthur Partridge, an expert on tree disease and forest pathology illuminates that:

> Forests are structured systems of many life forms interacting in intricate ways and disturbances are essential to their functioning. It's not fire disease fungi bacteria and insects that are threatening the well being of forests. Disease, fire, windthrow, and other disturbances are a natural part of the forest ecosystem and assist in dynamic processes such as succession that are essential to long term ecosystem maintenance. The real threat facing forests are excessive logging, clearcutting and roadbuilding that homogenize and destroy soil, watersheds and biodiversity of native forests[ii]

The Juncrock Proposed Action will focus on extracting trees infected with theses tree diseases: Red-Ring Rot, Brown Cubicle Butt Rot, Indian Paint Fungus, and Mistletoe. Allowing the Juncrock area to survive these natural processes is important in the creation of a healthy forest. In addition, tree disease can increase the number of snags (standing dead trees) per acre. Snags are habitat for the important and threatened Northern Spotted Owl.

● Evidence shows that removing trees that are infected with disease can actually spread disease further.

Facts: Chad Hanson, a national director of the Sierra Club, writes in his article *The Big Lie: Logging and Forest Fires* that "tree mortality in the West due to both fire and disease increases where logging occurs."[iii] The Forest Service General Technical Report RM-234 notes that Timber Mortality ("commonly defined as the net volume of timber dying annually over a given period of time, as a result of natural causes, such as insects, disease, suppression, fire, and windthrow"), has leaped nationally from a 1986 rate of 4.3 billion cubic feet per year to a 1991 rate of 5.5 billion cubic feet per year[iv]. Mortality is highest on the Pacific Coast (where logging is most prevalent), with a growing stock mortality of 15 cubic feet per acre annually, soaring above the national average of 11 cubic feet per acre annually[v]. This growing stock of dying timber is almost definitively due to suppression of natural processes linked to tree disease. Logging to reduce the susceptibility of the Indian Paint Fungus, Brown Cubicle Butt Rot, and Red Ring Rot may actually spread fungal spores and increase tree mortality in surrounding areas. Silviculturalists (tree doctors), note that

> It is extremely important to minimize wound damage [wounds created by tree disease] when entering a stand to implement silvicultural treatments. As no chemical or biological method will protect a tree, wound prevention is the only effective way to keep from reactivating dormant infections[vi]

Logging to prevent timber mortality due to disease serves to increase the amount of timber that is susceptible to disease infestation. Therefore logging is not a viable method for preventing stand susceptibility to disease.

• Many areas in Juncrock suffer from soil degradation from compaction and road building. The Forest Service should conduct an in-depth compaction analysis before additional logging is considered.

Facts: The White River Watershed Analysis reveals the Forest Service's lack of valid information on the effects of soil compaction on ecosystems within the White River Scenic Watershed. Compaction, that is prevalent in Juncrock, has been caused by past logging projects and ORV (off-road vehicles) use. These actions have had a drastic effect on plant growth and stream quality. Much of the Forest Service's data on soil is outdated (like the 1979 Soil Resource Inventory) and incomplete. Although the effects of past soil compaction are unknown in much of the Juncrock Area, the Forest Service has no plans to conduct a compaction analysis. Compaction is a serious problem, which may directly affect mortality/survivability of desired "natural" tree species such as the Oregon White Oak and the Ponderosa Pine. Encourage the Forest Service to conduct a study of the affects of soil compaction before logging in the area.

• Grazing has continually had a detrimental effect on Riparian areas (streams) within the Juncrock area. Urge the Forest Service to study the effects of grazing on native populations of fish and frogs that formerly thrived in the Juncrock area.

Facts: Cattle have already damaged riparian areas within the Juncrock area, specifically in the Camas Prairie and Clear Creek areas. The presence of cattle within riparian areas is not natural and extremely detrimental to riparian areas. Excrement runoff and bankside soil erosion pose a threat to native fish within the area. Excrement runoff has hurt native threatened species such as the Redband Trout and Spotted Frog. A grazing analysis of this type needs continuity to be effective in addressing these declining species. The continued negative impacts of grazing only harm aquatic ecosystems and damage entire watersheds.

● What to recommend to the Forest Service as an alternative to clearcut logging.

1) A Restoration alternative should be considered in the Juncrock area. A Restoration approach would focus on non-commercial logging while removing the least number of trees to accomplish the objective of increasing forest health. Having a siviculturalist (a professional tree doctor) restore the area through selected tree removal would promote forest health within sick areas. Possibly a controlled burn in certain areas could eliminate forest fire susceptibility and reduce disease presence.

2) A "No Old-Growth" alternative is what we really want to push for. Removing old growth will not improve forest health. Studies show that old growth forests contain more biomass and biodiversity than younger forests, therefore increasing the forest's ability to retaliate from disaster. Most of the old growth trees within the sale are Douglas fir. Douglas fir is resistant to most of the tree diseases identified by the Forest Service. It is also very resistant to fire. Please recommend that the Forest Service not remove trees older than 180 years of age.

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[i] Paul Bryant, "Juncrock Vegetation Restoration and Transportation Management Project," Scoping letter, 19 September 2001. Online at: http://www.bark-out.org/sale_juncrock.html

[ii] Dr. Arthur Partridge. "Press Conference with Senator Robert Torricelli," April 28, 1998, U.S. Capitol.

[iii] Chad Hanson, "The Big Lie: Logging and Forest Fires," Earth Island Journal, Spring 2000 Vol. 15, No. 1; Online at: http://www.earthislandjournal.org/eijournal/spr2000/eia_spr2000jmp.html

[iv] USDA, General Technical Report RM-234. Contact Rob Hopkinson if you would like to get a copy of this information.

[v] Ibid.

[vi] Forest Health Notes. Washington State University. 7 July 1997. 18 April 2002. Online at: http://ext.nrs.wsu.edu/info/fhn/indpaint.html