

RESOLUTION NO. 13-87

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
OF THE COUNTY OF SISKIYOU  
ESTABLISHING A POLICY OF NO NET INCREASE  
IN STATE AND FEDERAL LAND OWNERSHIP  
IN SISKIYOU COUNTY**

WHEREAS, removal of lands from private ownership removes such lands from the property tax base and further undermines the County's ability to provide vital public services; and

WHEREAS, ever increasing restrictions on other economic uses of public lands, including grazing and mining, continue to impede the economic vitality of much of rural America, and leaving land in private ownership is the best safeguard to ensure the continuation of the land's productive use; and

WHEREAS, when most of the National Forests were reserved against any other uses in the first decade of the Twentieth Century, there was a Compact with the Forest Counties that 25 percent of monies received from activities on the National Forests would be dedicated to support county roads and schools to compensate for the loss of future property tax revenue; and

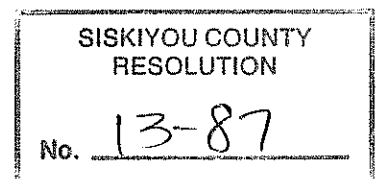
WHEREAS, the severe restrictions imposed on forest management by the listing of the northern spotted owl under the federal Endangered Species Act and the subsequent Northwest Forest Plan have resulted in a drastic decrease in forest receipts and the funding that used to be available to support county roads and schools; and

WHEREAS, the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 was adopted by Congress to provide some level of relief for forest communities impacted by changes in forest management and timber harvests, but funding has continued to decrease each year and authorized funding has now completely expired; and

WHEREAS, there have long been promises from the federal government of Payment In Lieu of Taxes to compensate local governments for providing services that benefit public lands while receiving no property taxes to support those services; and

WHEREAS, those promises have never materialized in a substantial way; and

WHEREAS, the agency formerly known as the California Department of Fish and Game has failed perpetually to make promised payments of property taxes to county governments for lands it has converted to fish and game refuges, owing Siskiyou County Five Hundred Sixty Three Thousand Eight Hundred Seventy Eight Dollars (\$565,878) as of the 2012-2013 fiscal year; and



WHEREAS, the stewardship of natural resources has long been of great importance to the economy and well-being of Siskiyou County; and

WHEREAS, private-sector ownership of lands and natural resources affords flexibility and incentive for active and effective management that do not exist on publicly-owned lands, as demonstrated by comparison of the condition of privately-managed forests in Siskiyou County with the condition of National Forest System lands; and

WHEREAS, laws such as the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the National Forest Management Act, which were adopted with good intentions, have become legal tools by which narrow, special interests seek to prevent active and self-supporting stewardship of National Forest System lands; and

WHEREAS, without offsetting mitigation, the conversion of privately-owned lands to publicly-owned lands will increase the total acreage where active management is held hostage to federal and state environmental laws and the paralyzing delays and expenses of continuous judicial review; and

WHEREAS, special interest agendas and misplaced agency priorities continue to cause the state and federal governments to purchase and remove lands from productive use and the property tax base; and

WHEREAS, in recent years there has been increased tendency by state and federal agencies to obtain privately-held water rights or to constrain the exercise of such rights; and

WHEREAS, the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors has adopted Resolution 08-153 asserting legal standing and formally requesting coordination with all federal and state agencies maintaining jurisdiction over lands and/or resources located in Siskiyou County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Siskiyou hereby adopts as County policy that:

There shall be no acquisition of private property (including any estates in land, any water rights, and any other privately held interests) in Siskiyou County by state or federal agencies

or by agents acting on behalf of such agencies using public or private funds and/or providing a state or federal agency with a right of first refusal to purchase or any management authority or control

without the prior approval of the County of Siskiyou and

the concomitant sale or exchange of public land to a private purchaser of equal or greater market value and equal or greater acreage and

without impacting existing uses by third parties for grazing, mining, or other economic activity; and

each year the County Assessor shall prepare a report on the loss of property tax revenue to Siskiyou County as a result of changes in ownership of lands that renders such lands non-taxable; and

each year a copy of this resolution shall be distributed to state and federal agencies, accompanying the distribution of Resolution 08-153 addressing coordination with all state and federal agencies.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors at a regular meeting of said Board, held on the 11th day of June, 2013, by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors Kohseff, Armstrong, Bennett and Criss

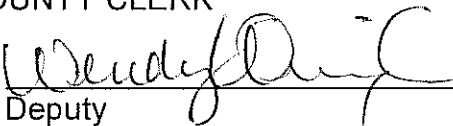
NOES: Supervisor Valenzuela

ABSENT: NONE


ABSTAIN: NONE

  
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Ed Valenzuela  
Chairman, Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:  
COLLEEN SETZER,  
COUNTY CLERK

By   
Deputy

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

  
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Brian L. Morris  
County Counsel