



Photo by SAM FOSTER

**TREES DOWN** — Only stumps and slash remain in some areas of Oswald West State Park. State officials ordered the logging operation to clear damaged trees and raise money for parks.

## Park logging condemned

By JOHN HAYES  
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CANNON BEACH — A coalition of Oregon environmental groups Wednesday condemned as illegal a state logging operation in Oswald West State Park that was ordered by state parks superintendent David Talbot.

The environmentalists said they would seek a court injunction to halt the "salvage" logging that began early last year and is expected to continue through July.

Talbot said he ordered the logging operation as a budget-balancing measure when facing budget cuts during a special session of the Oregon Legislature in January 1982.

"It's a complete outrage," said John Charles, director of the Oregon Environmental Council. "They are cutting down big sections of the park. They are clear-cutting some areas, they've bulldozed right through there cutting down big old-growth trees. If the public knew about this they wouldn't stand for it."

Charles said his organization and others reviewed the logging project and believe it violated the state's land-use planning goals, the Tillamook County comprehensive plan and Talbot's own written policy on logging in state parks.

Talbot sold nearly 3 million board feet of timber in the 2,474-acre oceanfront park, much of it blown down during windstorms in November 1981. Talbot said he gave orders that no healthy trees were to be cut.

But the logging resulted in the construction of a two-mile-long permanent logging road into a previously untouched spruce and hemlock forest. Since the logging began in the spring of 1982, most trees have been removed from about 200 acres of the park.

Lyman Comish, the Hammond logging contractor who was awarded the state contract for a bid price of

\$51.60 per thousand board feet, acknowledged Tuesday that his workmen had removed both healthy and damaged trees from a two-mile-long strip of the park when they constructed the rock-surfaced road into the northern end of the state park.

"You have to take everything when you build the road," he said.

Comish denied that he had cut healthy trees elsewhere in the park.

After an inspection of the park Sunday, Robert E. Frenkel, a geography professor at Oregon State University, said that in some areas 20 apparently healthy trees had been cut for every tree that had been removed because of wind damage.

And in a report to the Oregon Natural Heritage Advisory Council, Frenkel said the salvage operation would cause more wind damage in the park by creating open spaces. Some of the old-growth spruce trees removed by loggers were 350 years old.

Talbot said the decision to remove blown down and wind-damaged trees was made as the Legislature was about to make large cuts in state agency budgets to balance the state budget. During deliberations with the Ways and Means Committee during January 1982 Talbot offered a plan to remove the trees as a revenue measure, forecasting that some \$200,000 could be raised by selling the timber.

"We put packages of ideas together to raise some bucks," he said, adding that the plan was endorsed by the Legislature when the state Parks and Recreation Division's budget was approved.

The logging operation was consistent with a policy drafted by Talbot in 1980 that authorized for the first time the use of "intensive forest management" techniques, he said. But he acknowledged that the division had never drafted a park management plan for the park even though the plan was required under the 1980 policy.

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