



Josephine County Board of Commissioners

Lily N. Morgan, Chair • Darin J. Fowler, Vice Chair • Daniel E. DeYoung, Commissioner

May 8, 2019

Matthew Paciorek, District Ranger
USFS Wild Rivers Ranger District
2164 N.E. Spalding Avenue
Grants Pass, OR 97526

Re: Upper Briggs Creek Watershed Analysis #45593

Dear Mr. Paciorek:

Josephine County, by and through its governing body the Board of Commissioners, objects to the road closures described in Appendix A of the Upper Briggs Creek Watershed Analysis (published on 5/21/16). The County's objection is based on the prevention and suppression of wildfire.

Each year, Josephine County sends the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) a letter inviting the agency to engage in federally required coordination with the local governing body. Josephine County's Coordination Plan was most recently amended on 2/18/15. On page 5, the County's official plan states:

"Josephine County supports continued maintenance and operation of most, if not all, of the existing Forest Service and BLM roads. All open trails and roads should be designated as open. Full open access should be made available to the public lands for local purposes such as safety, health, economics, and use of recreation. No road or trail should be closed unless public safety or health demands its closing. No RS 2477 right of way should be closed. To provide funds for continued operation and maintenance of existing roads, Josephine County encourages forest planning that can be expected to generate sufficient revenue to support the existing Forest Service and BLM road network in Josephine County."

Additionally, the voters of Josephine County are overwhelmingly opposed to further road closures. When asked about this topic and related topics, the voters have replied as follows:

November 6, 2018

In your opinion, should federal agencies administering public lands in Josephine County create, improve and maintain a navigable road system?

Yes....32,917 (84.24%)

No....6,159 (15.76%)

COURTHOUSE

500 N.W. Sixth Street, Dept. 6, Grants Pass, Oregon 97526 • Phone: (541) 474-5221 Fax: (541) 474-5101

November 6, 2012

In your opinion, is the practice of forest management to produce timber revenue an appropriate funding source for County services?

Yes 25,407 71.50%

No 10,127 28.50%

May 20, 2014

In your opinion, should federal agencies maximize salvage harvesting of dead and dying timber and replant areas damaged by wildfires?

Yes....24,430 (89.15%)

No....2,972 (10.85%)

May 17, 2016

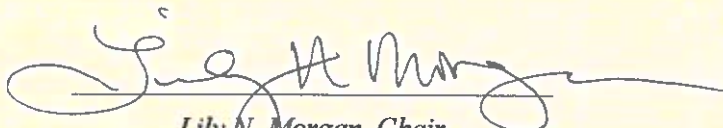
In your opinion, should the federal government designate 63 additional miles of the Rogue River as Wild and Scenic?

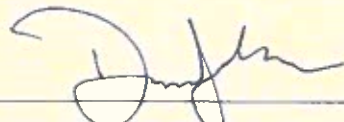
Yes....8,560 (31.38%)

No....18,720 (68.62%)

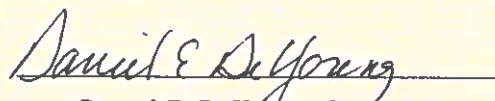
Therefore, Josephine County respectfully requests that the USFS decline to implement the road closures described by the Analysis, or any other road closures. Wildfire prevention and suppression requires more access to the forest, not less. We appreciate the USFS's commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy environment.

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