



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Fish and Wildlife

Umpqua Watershed District Office

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June 24, 2019

Elsbeth Gustavson
Tiller Ranger District
27812 Tiller Trail Highway
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Re: Skilleem Integrated Resource Restoration Project #50991

To Whom It May Concern:

I appreciate being given the opportunity to tour the proposed activities of the Skilleem Integrated Resource Restoration Project on June 13, 2019.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife greatly supports the proposed activities, especially with regards to plantation thinning, shaded roadside fuel breaks, prescribed fire, and wildlife habitat improvements. These proposed actions will provide a great benefit in support of local deer and elk populations within the treatment areas. These actions will provide additional early seral habitat that will help to stabilize the forage base for local deer and elk and other ODFW Conservation Strategy species.

ODFW also sees great value in the planned transportation system changes, especially where chronic road damage/erosion is taking place. There is a possible opportunity lost however, with the planned road decommissioning that can be addressed at the time of implementation. ODFW recommends that roads planned for decommissioning, 2700-990 and 992 roads and 2800-353 and 354 roads, be placed into storage as hunter/wildlife access and habitat opportunities instead of being removed completely through decommissioning. After chronic sedimentation issues are addressed on these roads, they can be easily maintained as hunter pedestrian access points and further enhanced for wildlife through native plantings of grasses, forbs, berries, and legumes. ODFW is currently working with land managers to both maintain and improve wildlife habitat and access for hunters and other recreationists within the Umpqua National Forest. The maintenance of these roads for recreation and wildlife use will greatly benefit this current effort.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to tour this project. Projects like this will complement the ongoing enhancement of wildlife habitat that ODFW is pursuing within the Umpqua Watershed District.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding ODFW's support of this project or suggestions made through these comments.

Sincerely,

Bill Cannaday
Wildlife Habitat Biologist
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Umpqua Watershed District