

Responsible Official, Hood Canal District Ranger Yewah Lau
c/o Kim Crider
Olympic National Forest Supervisor's Office
1835 Black Lake Blvd. SW
Olympia, WA 98512

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Wynoochee Restoration and Roads Management Project. I have been somewhat involved with this project since late 2018 as a member of the Olympic Public Access Coalition. As such I had the opportunity to attend several meetings with representatives of the Forest Service. These meetings were held both in the field and in the supervisor's office in Olympia. From what I see in the Preliminary EA many of our comments and concerns have been addressed.

The Olympic National Forest has been utilized for outdoor recreation by many families for decades. As I have stated before many people rely upon the USFS roads for access to their favorite areas for hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, berry picking, wild life viewing, mountain biking, horseback riding, and scenic drives. There are few if any areas in the southern portion of the Olympic National Forest for people to experience the challenges of off-roading in their Jeep type vehicles.

In general I support Alternate C with some exceptions as noted below. Please review following comments regarding the USFS's proposal for changing the status of several roads.

Many of the roads proposed for decommissioning are currently closed to motorized vehicles. When these roads are decommissioned it would be helpful if it is done in a manner that still allows for people and animals to follow and cross the roadbed without obstructions. Also, leave a short section of the road intact at the junction for dispersed camping or parking at a trailhead.

Road 2270 - I still feel that the loop road 2270 should be retained for vehicle travel. This could be utilized for firefighting as well as scenic travel for those that cannot hike. The maintenance level could be reduced from ML3 to ML2 beginning at the intersection with 2300 as shown in the EA. The segment of the 2700 between 2270560 and 2270600 spur is currently ML2 and is passable by well built Jeep type vehicles and I would like to see it stay that way. Is it possible to place appropriate signage and gate keepers at the two end points to limit access to Jeep type vehicles? With lockable gates and gate keepers the road could still be utilized in an emergency for firefighting and the like.

Spur 2270-400 - Retain as much as practical of the spur. This provides access to the Wynoochee Pass trail and the various trails within the national park. The current road is only passable for approximately the first 1.3 miles. (This appears to contradict the 2012 MVUM which shows 0.75 miles open.) There seems to already be sufficient parking at the end of the road for those accessing the trails in the Olympic National Park. Any existing roads beyond the large slide should be eliminated from the road maps and shown as foot trails.

Spur 2270-560 - This spur does not show on the 2012 MVUM and is basically only a parking area and trail foot trail due to a large slide. The primary use of this spur is as a trailhead to access

several trails and Discovery Lake. As is it works well. Can this be left alone for nature to reclaim? If not the please only do the minimum to decommission the road while leaving parking for the hikers.

Spur 2270-600 – Converting this spur to a trail for hiking as proposed in Alternative C makes sense since the existing roadway is overgrown and currently utilized as a hiking and horseback riding trail over Humpnoochee Pass. This is an excellent trail for hiking and horseback riding between the West Fork Humptulips and Wynoochee drainages.

Road 2275-100 - Please retain this as a ML2 road as currently show on the 2012 MVUM.

Road 2294 - Please keep as a ML2 road from the west end near the 2294-580 to the slide near spur 2294-480. The views down the valley from this road and spur 2294-500 are fantastic. I do not see a definition of what ML2-Restricted means for Alternate C.

Spur 2294-500 – Please keep as ML2. See Road 2294 for comments.

The unimproved camping area where 2275-100 formerly crossed crossed the West Branch of the Wynoochee River to join up with 2270 needs to be kept open in some fashion. Perhaps a limited number of spaces for RVs could be created away from the river and sessional placement of port-a-potties could be installed for use by tent campers.

In addition to the above comments I would like to know if any thought has been given to creating opportunities for OHV users to utilize any of the roads being decommissioned?

Thank you for the opportunity to comment again on the USFS's proposed actions in the Wynoochee watershed.

Sincerely;

K J Kaivo

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Past President, Grays Harbor Stumpbusters (a Four Wheel Drive Club)

Member, Pacific Northwest 4 Wheel Drive Association

Member, Olympic Public Access Coalition