



March 16, 2022

To: U.S. Forest Service
Middle Fork Ranger District

Re: Steeple Rock Rigdon Project

I am submitting comments on behalf of Oregon Equestrian Trails, a nonprofit 501(c)3 dedicated to maintaining trails and horse camps around the state and preserving equestrian access to public lands.

As you move forward on the Steeple Rock Rigdon project, we urge you to protect the Middle Fork Willamette National Recreation Trail #3609 from damage. Specifically:

- Please preserve appropriate buffers on both sides of the trail to maintain its scenic values.
- If the trail or the equestrian parking at Road 2127 and the Willamette River are damaged by thinning, burning, and other activities, please restore them to their former condition.

We further urge you to:

- Provide ample advance notice to us when heavy equipment is to be used near either the trail or the equestrian parking area on Road 2127. Please email us at eugene@oregonequestriantrails.org, and we will be happy to spread the word in the equestrian community.
- Utilize captured funds to improve the trail experience in the project area, including:
 - Enlarging and improving the parking area at Road 2127 and the Willamette River.
 - Creating a loop trail in the vicinity of the trailhead to enhance recreation opportunities for all.

The Middle Fork Willamette NRT is very important to us, and we appreciate your efforts to preserve and enhance it.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,
Leslye Wing
OET Eugene Chapter Chair