



Pacific Crest Trail Association

April 27, 2022

U.S. Forest Service
Pacific Southwest Regional Office
Ecosystem Planning, Post Disturbance Hazardous Tree Management Project
1323 Club Drive
Vallejo, California 94592

This letter submitted to: <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public/CommentInput?Project=60950>

RE: Post-Disturbance Hazardous Tree Management Project #60950 with comments pertaining to all three zones

Dear Regional Forester Eberlien,

I am writing on behalf of the 15,400 member Pacific Crest Trail Association (PCTA). PCTA is the U.S. Forest Service's primary private partner in the management and maintenance of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT). The foundation for this private-public partnership in the operation of National Scenic Trails is rooted in the 1968 National Trails System Act. As such, it is the PCTA's role to work with the U.S. Forest Service to ensure the best possible management of the PCT and the experience it affords trail users, year-round.

We have reviewed the Post-Disturbance Hazardous Tree Management North Zone Draft EA and appreciate the purpose and need for the project and the proposed action(s). PCTA is pleased that the section, "Issues Analyzed in Detail", includes the following statement and encourage its retention in the Final EA and Decision:

"Widespread removal of trees along the Pacific Crest Trail would significantly degrade the natural-appearing landscape, which is an essential part of the trail's nature and purpose."

In the "Special Management Areas" section of the document we are heartened that the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail is explicitly called out. This recognition of the PCT as a Congressionally designated area is foundational to ensure appropriate management of the trail and its surrounding resources.

PCTA supports the inclusion of the "Recreation and Scenery" design feature and encourages it to be retained in the Final EA and Decision:

"RA-15: Pacific Crest Trail: Forest personnel will work in partnership with Pacific Crest Trail Association to identify site-specific hazard trees which pose an imminent threat to the trail facilities and public safety."

While at this time, hazard tree removal is only proposed along 0.77 miles of the PCT on the Klamath National Forest, PCTA encourages the following design features to protect the trail experience:

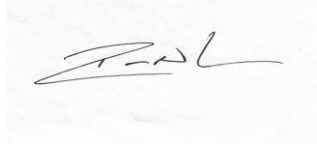
- Apply design feature RA-15 when roads selected for Hazardous Tree Management are within immediate foreground viewing distance (300') from the PCT
- Cut stumps as low as possible within the immediate foreground viewing distance (300') from the PCT
- Angle cuts away from the trail within the immediate foreground viewing distance (300') from the PCT



- Trees to be removed will be marked and trees remaining will be un-marked within the immediate foreground viewing distance (300') from the PCT

Thank you for considering PCTA's comments in response to the North Zone Post-Disturbance Hazardous Tree Project Draft EA and FONSI. We commend the U.S. Forest Service for quickly and actively addressing the widespread impacts from the 2020 and 2021 wildfire seasons and look forward to working with Forest staff to ensure the PCT's nature and purposes are provided for throughout the project.

Thank you,



Ian Nelson
PCTA, Regional Representative



Justin Kooyman
PCTA, Associate Director of Trail Operations

Cc: Lindsey Steinwachs, U.S. Forest Service, Pacific Crest Trail Program Administrator