January 10, 2023

Darren M. Cross, District Ranger

McKenzie River Ranger District

Willamette National Forest

RE: Oregon Hunters Association Scoping comments on the Calloway Project

The Oregon Hunters Association (OHA) is a sportsmen’s conservation organization with 10,000

members in 26 chapters across Oregon. OHA values our National Forests as a public place to hunt and recreate, and as a valuable asset providing habitat for the wildlife we care about. As such, the management and access of these lands are of critical importance to OHA. We are providing comments and input on the Calloway Project proposal.

OHA supports active management of our public lands including those actions described in the purpose and need of the project proposal. Managing forests, particularly those that are at high densities, is needed to keep these areas healthy and resilient.

OHA also supports the development of temporary access roads to accomplish this work. The subsequent decommissioning of these roads, plus some of the existing roads will benefit wildlife over the long term ~~from the reduction of~~ by reducing disturbance from traffic and help address road density management on the Forest, particularly when this is done in a strategic manner.

OHA is encouraged to see the inclusion of the roadside hazardous fuels treatments to create potential control lines to fight future fires more effectively. Any proactive management that the Forest can do to allow for improved firefighter response, reducing magnitude of wildfires that do start, and allowing for wildland fire control is beneficial. OHA believes this work can help avoid another catastrophic stand replacement fire like the Holiday Farm fire, that not only damaged natural resources and human infrastructure, but also led to the subsequent closure of the area to the public for a prolonged period of time.

OHA has no comments on specific areas for stand density treatments or specific roads, however we would offer the following for consideration.

* Where roads are decommissioned, either the existing roads or proposed temporary roads, consider seeding those road profiles with a native forage seed for large ungulates.
* Where stand density treatment prescriptions are being developed, consider lighter thinning prescriptions in some of the areas that are in closest proximity to the Holiday Farm fire

perimeter. These areas or large patches could then serve as better hiding cover and potentially thermal cover for large ungulates.

* Consider seasonal closures for some of the existing roads in areas of known elk and deer use.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Mike Totey

Conservation Director

Oregon Hunters Association