



March 13, 2023

Danika Carlson
Klamath National Forest
Salmon/Scott River Ranger District
11263 North Hwy 3
Fort Jones, CA
96032

Dear Ms Carlson,

I am writing on behalf of the 15,400 member Pacific Crest Trail Association (PCTA). The 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 that the nature and purposes for which the PCT was designated as a national scenic trail are protected throughout the River Complex Risk Reduction project.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the project proposal. As the Pacific Crest Trail Association's Regional Representative for Northern California and Southern Oregon, I have worked with Forest staff for more than 15 years in the management and maintenance of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. The congressionally designated Pacific Crest Trail is an important recreational resource on the Forest.

The project will have impacts on the PCT in the vicinity of Carter Meadows Summit. Roadside hazard tree removal, an underburn, and the ground-based harvest unit number 509-9 are all within the immediate foreground of the PCT. I appreciate the Recreation and Scenery design feature #9 that calls for low stumping felled trees in unit 509-9 and a VQO of retention. However, I would ask that the design feature be extended to the roadside hazard trees felled within 250' of the PCT. I would also request the Forest utilize cut-tree marking in the vicinity of Carter Meadows Summit. Finally, the EA document references the potential for fuel breaks along National Forest system trails. I would ask that the PCT not be used as a fuel break. The PCT's nature and purposes of the PCT are clearly articulated in the recently released [PCT Foundation Document](#); and, these project design features will help to ensure that the nature and purposes of the PCT are provided for throughout the project.

Specific to the under burn, PCTA supports introducing fire to the ecosystem where appropriate. While I understand timing of such a burn will be dependent on conditions, I would ask for advanced notice of the planned burn so that PCTA can inform trail users. Related, during a field visit with Forest staff, the potential of a short-term reroute of the PCT in the vicinity of the Carter Meadows Summit trailhead was discussed. I look forward to the opportunity to continue the discussion to find a viable solution that both keeps PCT users safe while also minimizing the inevitable impacts to their experience.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this important process and look forward to continuing to work with the staff on the Klamath National Forest in the management of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail.



Sincerely,

Ian Nelson

s/ Ian Nelson

Regional Representative

Pacific Crest Trail Association