

Janet Hutchison, Chairperson
Ochoco Forest Restoration Collaborative (OFRC)



April 9, 2024,
Jennifer Abernathy, NEPA Planner,
Lookout Mountain and Paulina Ranger districts
Ochoco National Forest
3601 NE Third St.
Prineville, Oregon 97754

Dear Ms. Abernathy,

Ochoco Forest Restoration Collaborative appreciates the opportunity to respond to the Corral Flat Endurance Trails Project Draft Environmental Assessment (EA). This project is located on the Ochoco National Forest within the Lookout Mountain and Paulina Ranger districts. The below comments are in response to the above analysis.

- Chapter 2, Proposed Action, 1st paragraph, 2nd sentence, "...berms, tanks traps – should be tank, delete the s..."
- Chapter 2, Proposed Action, 1st paragraph, 6th sentence, "...overall goals in – should be goal, delete the s..."
- Chapter 3, Environmental Consequences, 2nd paragraph, 1st sentence, "...in the Final Environmental Impact Statement – needs to add (FEIS), ..."
- Chapter 3, Recreation, Trail Miles, Existing Condition, 2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence, "...that would add trails – should be trail, delete the s, ..."

- Chapter 3, Wildlife, Potential for adverse change in amount of suitability of habitat, 4th paragraph, 1st sentence, ...headwaters of Ochoco creek – Creek needs to be capitalized..."
- Chapter 3, Botany, 1st paragraph, last sentence, "...on these species is – should be are..."
- Chapter 3, Botany, Issues Addressed, 1st Issue, "...Riparian Habitats/Wet Meadows/GDEs – what does GDEs stand for..."
- Chapter 3, Invasive Plants, Methodology, 6th sentence, "...plant species is – should be are..."
- Chapter 3, Invasive Plants, Existing Condition, 2nd paragraph, 4th sentence, "NFS – what does NFS stand for..."
- Chapter 3, Environmental Consequences, **Cumulative Effects Consideration**, Table 3: What is your definition of fuels management under Spears Vegetation Management Project, Canyon Fuels and Vegetation Management Project, and Howard Elliot Johnson Fuels and Vegetation Management Project. Does this include prescribed burn? Also, under Reasonably Foreseeable Future Projects: there is no mention of prescribed burns. So, are none occurring in this project area in the future?
- Chapter 3, Hydrology and Aquatic Species, **Environmental Consequences**, 2nd paragraph, 3rd sentence, states, "Due to the high level of consistent use, there is a high level of existing disturbance and potential stream and riparian area effects within a majority of the project area." Additionally in Chapter 3, Hydrology and Aquatic Species, **Direct and Indirect Effects of the Proposed Action**, 2nd paragraph, 1st sentence, states, "There are a total of 53 trail crossings on RHCA areas, with up to 17 sites not associated with existing Forest Service system roads (Figure 7)." *In OFRC's Riparian Zones of Agreement, under Recommendations for Riparian Areas, under number 8, Recreation, 2nd sentence states, "We recommend that planning and projects pertaining to trails, campgrounds, and dispersed camping seek to minimize and mitigate recreation impact on Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas (RHCAAs)." How do you plan to minimize and mitigate recreation impacts on RHCAAs?*

- Due to lack of clarity in the maps provided we were unable to confirm whether the road closures proposed were all designated closed by previous NEPA documents. We ask that the forest service perform their due diligence to ensure that all physical road closures proposed in this project were designated closed previously in order to uphold the agency's multiple use mission.

We acknowledge that there will be some short-term impacts to riparian zones due to project actions but weighing the short-term impacts to the long-term environmental benefits, we feel these impacts are merited. The collaborative asks that the forest service do their due diligence to mitigate these impacts to RHCAs.

Sincerely,



Janet Hutchison,

OFRC Chairperson