

**Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative  
Landscape Planning Collaboration Committee  
Middle Fork Fire Affected Roads Comment**

Dear Middle Fork Ranger District,

The Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative Landscape Planning Collaboration Committee would like to register its support for the Middle Fork Fire Affected Roads Revised Project Proposal to reduce the risks posed by fire-killed and injured trees along important access routes in the burned areas. Reopening these roads is critical for restoring public access to the forest for recreation, management, and enjoyment. Moreover, ensuring these roads are clear and passable is essential for enabling quick and effective firefighter access to suppress future wildfires that may ignite in these areas.

We strongly advocate that the Forest Service utilizes any and all opportunities through this project to further implement the potential operational delineation (POD) concept and establish effective control lines. This is particularly critical for forest areas bordering communities or situated in east wind alignment of communities, as they face a higher risk from future wildfires. Strategically reducing hazardous fuels along these road systems will bolster their capability to function as reliable fire control lines. Furthermore, promptly removing fire-killed and injured trees that pose safety hazards along potential control lines is essential for ensuring firefighter safety and enhancing the effectiveness of PODs in future fire suppression efforts.

While we recognize the need to complete the necessary environmental analysis, we urge the Forest Service to prioritize and expedite this and similar critical public safety and wildfire preparedness projects. The entire process should be completed as soon as possible, as prolonged delays, such as those experienced with the Cedar Creek Fire, can have serious consequences. The longer it takes to remove hazardous trees, the greater the risk posed to the workforce responsible for their removal. Swift action is imperative to mitigate the urgent hazards, access impairments, and future risk caused by fire-killed trees along these crucial access roads.

Thank you for proposing this important project. We look forward to its timely implementation to enhance public access and wildfire response capabilities in the Middle Fork Ranger District.

On behalf of the Landscape Planning Collaboration Committee,

*/s/ Sarah Altemus-Pope*

Coordinator  
Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative