

File Code: 1950; 1560
Date:

Ryan Talbott and Doug Heiken
Wild Earth Guardians
P.O. Box 40490
Portland, OR 97240

Dear Mr. Talbott and Mr. Heiken:

Thank you for your February 28, 2024 letter regarding the 27 Road Fuel Break Project on the Mt. Hood National Forest. In your letter you expressed concern that the project may not have adhered to recent direction issued by Chris French, Deputy Chief of the National Forest System. On December 18, 2023, the Deputy Chief sent a letter to all Regional Foresters requiring projects proposing vegetation management activities that will occur where old growth forest conditions (based on regional old-growth definitions) exist on National Forest System lands to be submitted to him for review and approval.

The Pacific Northwest Region is in the process of developing an old-growth review process framework for National Forest System units in Oregon and Washington. For each project, units will be required to demonstrate whether vegetation management activities will occur where old growth forest conditions exist and how they made that determination. All projects signed after the December 2023 letter will be reviewed locally to determine if they qualify for review by the National Forest System Deputy Chief.

The decision memo authorizing the 27 Road Fuel Break Project on the Mt. Hood National Forest was signed on January 29, 2024. The 27 Road Fuel Break Project is consistent with policy and direction. Details in the project record (available on the [27 Road Fuel Break Project website](#) accessible from the Mt. Hood National Forests website under the *Projects* link in the *Managing the Land* section) explain that no vegetation management is proposed in units where old growth forest conditions exist. Appendix B of the project's Decision Memo lists existing unit conditions. Appendix E contains further information regarding the definitions used to determine stand structural stages and how the project is consistent with the intent of E.O. 14072.

Again, thank you for your letter and for your interest in our National Forest System lands. If you have further questions, please contact Jackie Groce, Director of Resource Planning and Monitoring, at Jacqueline.Groce@usda.gov.

Sincerely,

for JACQUELINE A. BUCHANAN
Regional Forester



Enclosure: WEG and OR Letter Re MTH NF Fuel Break CE

cc: Laura Schweitzer, Meta Loftsgaarden, Jackie Groce