

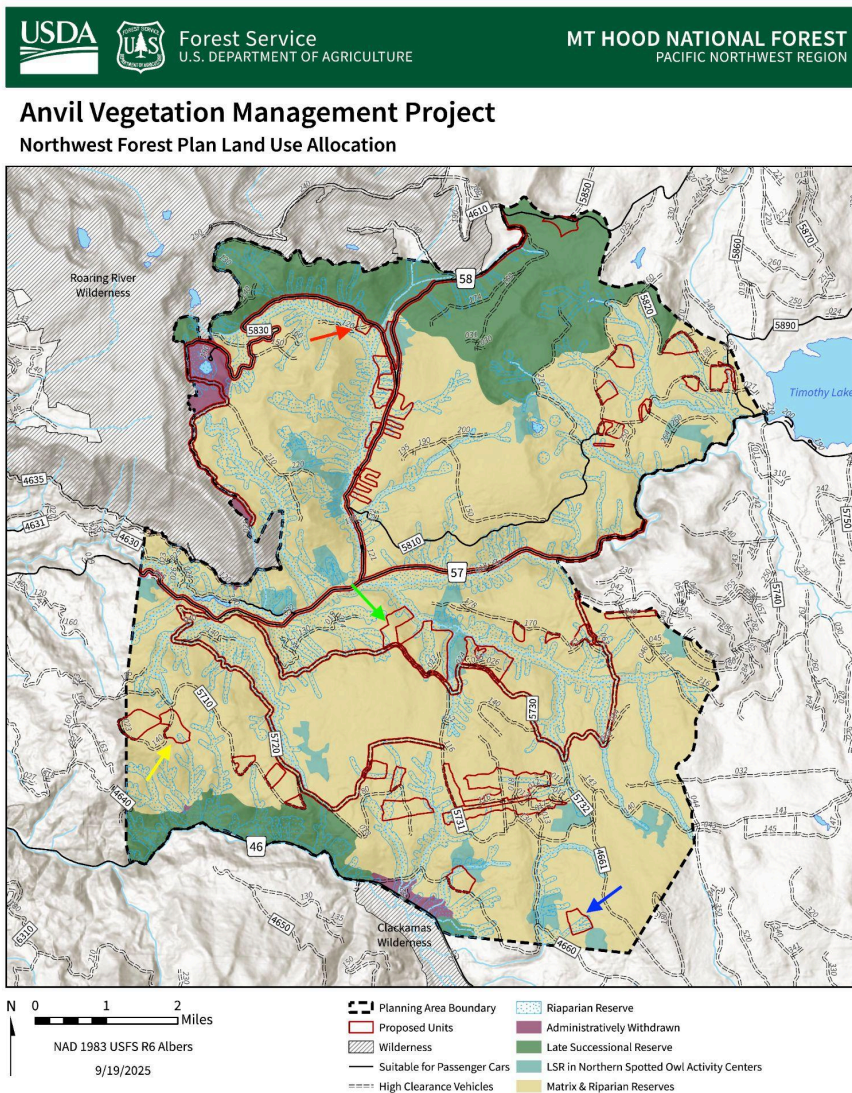
Hello, I'm reaching out to submit my public comment on the Anvil Vegetation Management Project. As a resident of Portland, I have dedicated a significant amount of my free time hiking and exploring Mt. Hood National Forest. I, and everyone else living in the Portland area, rely on the intact forest ecosystems in the area for clean air, fresh drinking water, and their essential function to store carbon and regulate our climate.

Overall, I do support the primary objective of this project, as thinning plantations and reducing fuel loads decrease the risk of high intensity fire and promote the reestablishment of biodiversity. I agree that fire exclusion/suppression has had a significant negative impact to the ecosystems in MHNF, and I urge the Forest Service to follow through with their condemnation by prioritizing fire as a management tool in this project (applicable to all of the units I observed). I urge the Forest Service to properly close/decommission excess roads after management to prevent unnecessary access and damage to the adjacent forest. I also urge the Forest Service to follow

through with their support for Tribal inclusion by actively engaging in consultation with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde for this project.

On top of my general statements, I also have some notes from my observations in the project area from this Summer and Fall. To better organize my information (for myself and readers), I added color-coded arrows to a copy of the project map (left) pointing to the units that I observed.

One of the first units I surveyed (red arrow) surrounds a drivable road that, considering its deteriorating condition and evidence that it treads onto a distinguished waterway (multiple culverts are installed within), should be permanently closed after management is completed. I also observed some large Western Redcedar and a riparian area featuring Skunk Cabbage within the unit (close to road) that should be avoided during management.



Additionally, I advise that young Redcedar that are reestablishing in the unit be spared to keep natural regenerative processes intact.

I also have concerns about another unit I surveyed (yellow arrow). The unit is adjacent to some mature stands of forest featuring suitable habitat for threatened species (possibly Spotted Owl) and features an older, closed road (forks from 5710?). The potential impacts of these adjacent forest stands, in addition to the condition of the road adjacent to the unit, should be included in analysis for the project.

Yet another unit I surveyed (green arrow) is intersected by a road that, according to the map, is closed. It appeared to have been out of commission for a long time, featuring dense overgrowth in some sections. Will the road be reopened for treatment or will it remain in its current state as the project ensues? Regardless of what happens, I advocate for a plan that ensures the road will not be accessible once management concludes. Another important note, in the northern section of the unit, the NE facing slope that drains into what I believe is Peavine Creek is very steep, with a grade ranging from approximately 40% to 55% in some areas.

Just yesterday, I surveyed a unit (blue arrow) in the southern portion of the project area that features a road (not shown on map and is closed to vehicle access) that leads directly to the unit. A colleague and I identified that there is another plantation adjacent to the road (separate from the observed unit) that needs thinning treatment in addition to the unit. To minimize resources used to reopen and close this road, wouldn't it be more efficient to wait to reopen the road once a proposal is made to thin that plantation as well? There are also stands of mature/old forest (and potentially a buffer for a Northern Spotted Owl) adjacent to the unit, so I advise the FS to include the potential impact to these habitat areas in their analysis.

On the way back for my survey yesterday, I noticed that a portion of the unit alongside road 5731 (just above the 5731 label on the map) is already thinned. I believe that it is a perfect candidate for a prescribed burn to remove the excess buildup of dead wood that currently seems to smother the understory.

I recommend that everything I advocate for, or mention in an observational context, in this comment be included in the analysis process for The Anvil Creek Vegetation Management Project.

Sincerely,

Chris Berry