

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/16/2019 7:00:00 AM

First name: Susan

Last name: Applegate

Organization: Umpqua Watersheds

Title:

Comments: Dear District Ranger Kathleen Minor and Team Leader Elsa Gustavson:

The attachment below is my public comment of the Skillem Restoration project. Please accept this document in good faith that our common intentions are for what is best for our South Umpqua River and the many species dependent upon its health. I am writing on behalf of myself and for the committee of the Umpqua Watersheds organization that is campaigning for the Crater Lake Wilderness proposal.

Susan Applegate

--Attachment--

Susan Applegate, Wilderness Committee

Umpqua Watersheds, Inc.

August 16, 2019

Kathleen Minor, District Ranger

Tiller Ranger District

27812 Tiller Trail Highway

Tiller, OR 97484

Re: EA for Skillem Integrated Resource Restoration Project

Public Comment

Overall, this is a worthy and well considered project. It is worthy because of the damaged area that is in need of repair and restoration efforts. It is well considered because of the decommissioning of roads, including roads that will be constructed during the restoration work, and the roads that exist but have been determined to present

opportunities for ingress when that is not desired. Roads that will be blocked but available for use during a wildfire are otherwise noted.

The project is well considered because one important area within the project will be managed through use of fire. This will be useful on many levels -- from observing the use of fire as a tool to manage underbrush accumulation as well as invasive species management. Monitoring the fire management approach in this area will serve other areas within the same bio region.

The project also provides an area for sugar pine regeneration, an important species in our south Umpqua region. Thinning of plantation stands is vitally important not only from a wild fire point of view but also of wildlife needs. These thick stands are ecological deserts. Opening them up offers habitat potential to multiples of species, both flora and fauna.

The riparian restoration aspect is critically important. With only 40 returning Chinook to the upper South Umpqua, the need for riparian repair is urgent. Whether you go with the wood logs as placement in the water or rock boulders, the need for providing cold pools, shade, capturing gravels and sands for spawning habitat, building up the damaged substrate of the bed is needed. Not mentioned but also important, is the planting of tree and brush species that attract insects, like pollinators into the riparian area in greater numbers and frequency. Native species that begin their bloom in late February through the end of summer provide food for Chinook.

The one element to the project plan that is of concern is the ability for campers to utilize riparian areas near index pools which threaten the few struggling Chinook salmon. Please do all that you can to stop the camping in these restoration areas. The index pools are as yet fragile and should not be used in any way by human beings.

Thank you,

Sincerely, Susan Applegate