

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/8/2021 5:03:52 PM

First name: Cynthia

Last name: Anderson

Organization:

Title:

Comments: In July of 2020, following months of isolating lock down early in the pandemic, a small group of masked members of the Willamette Valley Broadband of the Great Old Broads for Wilderness ventured into the first of many units we have surveyed in the Quartzville Middle Santiam project. As the leader of the Willamette Valley Broadband, this is the kind of activity I had been wanting our group to engage in for quite a while. We connected with Cascadia Wildlands to show us where to go, teach us what to look for, and how to use Avenza maps. Since then, over 30 members have been out at least one time to field check 40 units. We dedicated a three day campout at Lost Prairie during the historic heat dome in June of 2021 taking a deeper dive into field checking and spending time with your interdisciplinary team to better understand what you do and why you do it. I believe we came away with that understanding and certainly a high regard for the work you do and the humans that you are.

Our findings, questions and concerns about your draft environmental assessment are included in comments submitted in another document on behalf of our Broadband. That document represents hundreds of volunteer hours spent surveying, documenting, researching, and writing by our members passionate about keeping wild lands wild and healthy forests intact. We want these things not to the detriment of communities that historically were dependent on timber revenues but to support all communities. We are all dependent on having a healthy planet. The Willamette National Forest, as are all forests in the Pacific Northwest, is uniquely qualified to mitigate the effects of climate change.

It's time to change the paradigm from timber harvest on our public lands for short term economic gains to recognizing the value of forest preservation. Sequestering carbon, guaranteeing clean drinking water, bringing back salmon and steelhead, maintaining biodiversity and healthy soils while providing places for humans to play, hunt and fish need to be the primary goals of your agency to replace contributing to timber supply for local economies.

For the record, I support Alternative #4 with the changes outlined in the comments submitted by the Willamette Valley Broadband.

Thank you for considering our recommendations.