

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/27/2022 4:48:32 PM

First name: Sarah

Last name: Farahat

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To whom it may concern,

Thank you for your continued care of the Clackamas River Ranger District. I acknowledge that the Forest Service has dealt with many obstacles related to reopening the forest and applaud your commitment to do a full environmental analysis of the current road system and the roadside abatement being considered there. I believe you have an opportunity here to reexamine the ecological impacts of forest roads that are exacerbated by recent fires, especially impacts to salmon and drinking water. The Mt. Hood National Forest road system is oversized, and the agency did not have funding to maintain it even before the fires. Reducing the open road network could address economic and ecological challenges the agency faces.

Burned trees are a part of the ecosystem of the forest. Danger tree removal would not make sense on roads that are currently closed or decommissioned, have previous decisions to be closed or decommissioned, or on roads identified in the analysis for future closure or decommissioning. In terms of "striking distance", the proposal regarding tree-heights will likely be based on site specific circumstances. This is a good way to move forward as long as those circumstances are discussed in the analysis with Project Design Criteria.

As a non-native Oregonian I stand with Indigenous neighbors to say that maintaining access to cultural resources requires meaningful consultation with the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs and the Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde. Mt. Hood's management plan provides direction on honoring treaty rights, and traditional areas that are covered by the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

Impacts to the wildlife and available habitat are very important to me. Perhaps more so than use for humans. The planning area hosts congressionally designated Wild and Scenic Rivers. All management activities within these river corridors must protect and or enhance the identified outstandingly remarkable values for those segments. Furthermore, this project spans Late Successional Reserves and Critical Habitat for the northern spotted owl, which often use burned patches for foraging. A full analysis on current and proposed impacts to wildlife and available habitat should be completed before this project is approved.

Lastly, the Forest Service must acknowledge the impacts to local communities which have resulted from the long-term closure of Highway 224 along the Clackamas River. The Oregon Department of Transportation is close to completing their roadside abatement activities on the state highway. I encourage you to consider allowing river access after these activities are completed, even if the Forest Service roads are not ready for reopening. The Forest Service could keep their connecting roads closed while still providing access to the river while they complete their roadside work on roads deeper into the forest.