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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I have a cabin in the Mt Hood National Forest, am an Oregon Master Naturalist, and an avid hiker/snow shower. 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.

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. Snags and damaged trees play an important role in forest ecology.

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.

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.