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Comments: Hello,

Please consider following the legal requirements of wilderness designation in regards to management of the Kootznoo Wilderness area's Cube Cove. Active management is extremely restricted by law in designated wilderness areas regardless of whether there are other compelling interests such as ecological restoration or social or economic goals except in extreme circumstances. While the ecological restoration goals are in fact important ones and conservation of biodiversity could potentially be enhanced by the proposed project, it is not allowable to conduct such actions in designated wilderness areas. Furthermore, while passive restoration may involve a much longer time frame, natural processes combined with protection from deleterious human impacts will likely result in the restoration of robust, wild, diverse and fully functioning ecosystems in this area over time. It is therefore, in addition to being illegal, also unnecessary to implement active restoration on the proposed scale.

Please consider the above argument in light of the value of wilderness designation which is a highly significant and valuable legal framework which provides critical ecological and perhaps more importantly, social benefits. Weakening wilderness designation by allowing increasing exceptions to the rules will result in diminishing wilderness.

I'm a forester. I spend much of my time actively managing forests to achieve goals such as reducing the threat of severe fire or to manage for increased forest health or to work towards restoring degraded forest ecosystems. The work I do is not legal in wilderness nor should it be. Please follow the letter and spirit of the laws that govern wilderness designation which provide immense ecological and social benefits to people and ecosystems.

Sincerely,

Patrick Uhtoff

Ashland, Oregon