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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am opposed to your final environmental assessment and draft choosing Alternative 3 with finding no significant impact.

I am not altering my original comment asking for additional mule deer hiding cover to be retained between 30% minimum to 50% optimum. This is the advice our Protect Animal Migration received from our contact with ODFW wildlife biologists who monitor our central Oregon mule deer populations.

A significant part of the 34,536 acre project includes wildlife corridors near the Hwy. 97 wildlife undercrossings. Safe migration of mule deer depends on adequate thermal and hiding cover along with adequate forage. When extensive thinning occurs along with mastication of shrubs, all this protection is removed or disturbed, adversely affecting them. Mule deer summering in our national forests surrounding the community in which I live depend on the migration corridor to their winter range in the Bend Ft. Rock area. There are numerous other threats that they face in getting to important summer and winter ranges [hellip].all forms of human presence from hikers, Mtn. bikers, ATVs, unleashed dogs, and numerous roads without wildlife crossings. All these sum up to compounded threats on their survivability.

If you pay attention to ODFW's reports on the status of our mule deer populations being at less than 50% sustainability, you must do all that is possible to reduce impacts on their survivability. The main threats are the losses of adequate habitat and connectivity. Your present decision adds to these threats.

In summary, your project including proposals for re-treatment in a decade will have unintended and substantial long term negative impacts on our mule deer populations.

Sincerely,

Donna Harris D.V.M.