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First name: Sharon

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Please accept my comments about the proposed USFS rumbling Owl Fuels Reduction Project:

I support aquatic restoration, replacing undersized culverts, road decommissioning, thinning in overgrown tree plantations, restoration of the Owl Creek gravel pit, use of aquatic-approved herbicides, and some use of prescribed fire within the WUI, especially along existing roads.

I have major concerns about the destruction of winter range habitat, especially the east-west migration corridor just north of the Holland Lake Road extending to the Swan Range foothills. Previous Plum Creek logging practices have led to a fragmented winter range within the Rumbling Owl Project. This decrease in large connected patches of mature forests greatly impacts hiding cover and thermal cover for wildlife. I urge the USFS personnel to maintain the intact high-quality winter range values and habitat connectivity.

Please remove the proposed prescribed burn in unit 297 within the riparian management zone along the wildlife travel corridor along Holland Creek.

I urge caution in implementing prescribed fire and thinning (fire-break) treatments along the Lower Foothills Trail. Care needs to be taken so that the trail does not become hazardous like the USFS prescribed fire treatment along the Crystal Lake Trail. This trail has slumped and in some places, it would be difficult for folks not familiar with the area to find the trail.

I recommend that you consult with the Salish Pend d' Oreille Culture Committee to identify and protect the culturally modified trees within the project to ensure these historical values are preserved.

Please remove the unnecessary temporary road in Unit 138 from the proposal.

Also, the grazing lease in the Rumbling Owl project should be discontinued. The spread of noxious weeds and barbed wire fences negatively impacts wildlife.

Thank you.