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First name: Cheryl

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Officials,

I have lived in Rocky Point, Oregon, surrounded by National Wilderness designated Forestland for 24 years. As a property owner, I consider my observations of forest management to be a high priority in understanding my property rights and responsibilities and work hard to manage my property according to what is healthy for the nearby forest and its habitats. I have invested many weeks of work every year toward property management, a more substantial amount of time than if my property was located outside the forest. Therefore I have a higher investment into forest management than the typical citizen.

As someone who attained a college degree in mass communications, I also analyze how the forest communicates with the public about forest management. In all of 24 years living in the forest, owning property and a home in the forest, recreating in the forest and socializing at nearby resorts and businesses, I have hardly heard a peep from forest officials.

Its rare to see a forest official in the forest. I have not seen or heard of events sponsored by the forest to engage the public in learning about the forest, the ecosystem, the animals using the forest as a habitat nor have I heard of any official making yearly classroom introductions to school children about the forest, its ecosystems, the animals living in the forest, or what threatens the forest. Besides classrooms throughout Oregon, there are numerous resorts nearby operating in the forest that can be utilized for "Get to Know Your Forest" educational retreats lead by forest officials who are educators.

One of my complaints is that officials managing the forest do not see their role as educators and fail to communicate to or engage the public in the importance of what they do as forest officials, the importance of the forest habitat to thrive, the importance of the public to learn the same so they can responsibly interact with the forest." In fact, I have only received one mailing from the forest in all of 24 years and I live in the forest. I receive updates through my neighborhood firehouse as to 'prescribed burning' being done but there is NO REAL EDUCATION OR OUTREACH being done by forest officials.

Numerous times I have found trash dumped by someone mistreating the forest, and in my search for a forest official to contact about the crime, found that forest officials have no funding for enforcement agents to fight any crime on forest land. The sheriff responded to one of my calls and removed the trash BUT IT IS THE FOREST OFFICIALS RESPONSIBILITY AND FOREST OFFICIALS DO NOT MAKE THEMSELVES ACCESSIBLE. There are forest service roads that could be better monitored with webcams but the forest service will always say, "we have no funding."

ANOTHER COMPLAINT is I use to hear lots of owls from my porch, but the Crater Lake Zip Line was allowed to operate less than a 1/2 mile away, and since then, the owls have left and moved elsewhere. This is an area straddled by two designated wilderness areas and forest officials allowed a business to operate on wilderness forestland.

I believe there are many topics involved with your planning strategy which need simplifying and more steps need to be implemented in achieving your goals, especially if "officials" wish to involve the public as the public is comprised of many types of people and groups of people with diverse objectives for how they wish to use public land. Educational outreach should therefore be one of your goals and more funding is needed to properly communicate your goals.