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First name: Melinda

Last name: Moore

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I Support Access and Active Management in the Northwest Forest Plan

Dear Northwest Forest Plan,

I'm writing today as a lifelong citizen of Northern California and Oregon about the proposed re-arrangement of the northwest Forest proposition. We need to keep our public forests public for all to use. This includes hikers, backcountry skiers, camping dispersed, campgrounds, recreational vehicles, hunting, fishing, river rafting, rock hounding, photography,... Accessible to all. By enjoying access and recreation on public lands and believe continued access is important for all. I appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback for the Northwest Forest Plan.

I am concerned with the management of the northwest forest. Access to the public through roads and motorized use is crucial for various reasons. I believe motorized routes should not be closed arbitrarily through restrictive designations and management decisions and the USFS should maximize the amount of routes available.

The economic benefit for local communities is a factor the USFS needs to consider. Recreation is a trillion dollar a year industry. Motorized use on public lands has grown tremendously in popularity over the past few years and the USFS should be looking for ways to help the local communities capitalize on these opportunities. Closing routes through forest designations will be irresponsible management as it will concentrate the growing number of users into smaller areas. Motorized routes not only accommodate motorized users but emergency response teams as well. These forests contribute to local economies through timber harvest, recreation, grazing, rock hounding and other contributions. All of these require public access throughout these forests.

In order to advance equity of access on public land for those with mobility impairment disabilities, it is important to recognize that discrimination towards American with disabilities within federal land management agencies is deeply rooted and hidden in plain sight. Recreation, primarily motorized recreation has taken a backseat to conservation and protection. Motorized recreation is often times the only way those with mobility impairment disabilities are able to access our amazing places out of cities.

In order to prevent and avoid adverse resource impacts and user conflict, the USFS should be actively managing the area. As popularity for outdoor recreation grows, the USFS should be looking at ways to provide reasonable access that will sustain the growing numbers of visitation. Restricting use and concentrating use will only increase impact.

We need our forest service campgrounds and public bathrooms open in a timely manner all spring-fall so people are able to use them. The last few years I've seen campgrounds closed in July, that should be open in May. This means people that should be camping in campgrounds with actual toilets, are now in dispersed camping areas and not taking the care that they should because these resources are closed to the public,

I support dispersed camping on public land, and a robust network of designated routes is the best way to ensure abundant dispersed camping access. I believe dispersed camping should be allowed within the appropriate disturbance area alongside each route.

I don't want to see the USFS give preferential treatment to any user group over another. I believe the USFS can manage for all types of recreation within this area. Motorized and non-motorized users can co-exist and one should not be restricted to accommodate another.

Wildfire is the greatest threat to the Northwest Forest. Catastrophic fires have decimated communities, habitat and forests due to lack of better forest management. The forest needs to be thinned of dead trees and falling dead. Fire roads act as a natural fire barrier and should be protected . The gates should be open in a timely matter. You'd be surprised how many of us 4-wheelers bring an ax and help maintain these roads for all of us to use.

Sincerely,

Melinda Moore

PO Box 1388 Truckee, CA 96160-1388

melindacolleen@gmail.com