

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/3/2025 10:36:02 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Mr. Schultz,

I am very glad to have you running the Forest Service. I assume with your management we will be cutting more timber with less restrictions.

I have been working in the Mt. Hood National Forest and the Gifford Pinchot National Forest since incorporating our logging company in 1983. My work in the Mt. Hood National Forest dates back to 1972.

Here are some of the things we need to change in my opinion

1. Start putting out the forest fires instead of watching them burn. Privatize the firefighting. Machines sit on lowboys for weeks and get paid for doing nothing when they are dispatched to a fire under the current system. Some of our employees take off every summer (which is very irritating) to go cut on the fires. Once two of our guys went for two weeks straight to the same place and didn't even cut a single tree all the while making \$1000 a day and their employer another \$1000.
2. In the Mt. Hood National Forest we need to get rid of winter range elk restrictions. There are hardly any elk there and if there were they would come to the logging unit and eat like they did on our Washington DNR sale at Cougar in 2007. The Mt Hood National went to conditions base timber sales, which would be okay, except it has to be way too dry to get soil moisture meter down to 20%. We need to do it visually by checking the rutting of the soil. I realize we need to monitor it but it is way too strict as it stands. We buy these expensive cutting machines for thinning and then they can only use them 5 months out of the year.
3. The Gifford Pinchot is worse. The operating season starts mid July and ends at the end of September. You are operating on a waiver in October. They are also extremely nitpicky.

The thinning we have done since the 1990's looks great and obviously slows down a fire. We really don't need the 13 and 14 foot spacings, but widen it out to 18 feet and beyond. Put all of those scientists and biologists to work putting up timber sales, instead of them not doing much.