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Title: President
Comments: Dear Forest Service and Gabriel Wishart, Middle Fork District Ranger Tyler Steele, NEPA Planner Middle Fork District, Willamette National Forest 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492 Submitted online via https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?Project=61142 Re: Steeple Rock Rigdon Draft Environmental Assessment #61142
Project Description
The Steeple Rock Rigdon project area consists of approximately 21,653 acres along Hills Creek Reservoir and is located on the Middle Fork Ranger District approximately 14 miles south of the city of Oakridge in Lane County. The project would treat managed stands using a combination of commercial thinning, skips, and gaps on 3,169 acres of managed stands less than 80 years old. The project would also involve non-commercial treatments (288 acres), fuel reduction treatments (1,450 acres), and meadow enhancement (30 acres). EA at 6. The project would decommission up to approximately 7.1 miles of roads and store up to approximately 30.6 miles in a hydrologically stable condition. EA at 19.
The Youngs Rock Rigdon and Steeple Rock Rigdon timber production projects with more than 6,500 acres of commercial logging and more than 2000 acres of non commercial treatments are contiguous with each other with less than 1 separating many planned and proposed units. These two projects combined will have great and long lasting negative impacts to the Bohemia, Youngs, Pine, Boulder, Snake and Fir Creeks fish and wildlife. These great and long lasting negative impacts from the Youngs Rock Rigdon and Steeple Rock Rigdon timber production projects will greatly impact ESA listed Northern Spotted Owl as well as have possible impacts to the residing ESA listed gray wolf pack residing in the headwaters of the Middle Fork Willamette River and North Fork of the Umpqua River. League of Wilderness Defenders therefore concludes the cumulative impacts of the Youngs Rock Rigdon and Steeple Rock Rigdon timber production projects on the Northern Spotted Owl and Northern Gray Wolf must be assessed and revealed via a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement to the Youngs Rock Rigdon EIS. Only then will the interested public and local environmental non governmental organizations have a complete picture of the cumulate impacts of these two projects on ESA listed species as well as other protected species in and adjacent to the planned management impacts.
We conclude the Environmental Assessment of the Steeple Rock Rigdon project is completely inadequate to reveal the cumulative impacts therefore the US Forest Service, Willamette National Forest must assess and reveal these impacts as part of Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement to the Youngs Rock Rigdon EIS before the Steeple Rock Rigdon Project moves forward.
For the wild things-
Shannon Wilson
President of the League of Wilderness Defenders
Since 1988 protecting the wild things and wild places of Oregon and beyond.
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