



File Code: 1950
Date: May 9, 2018

Dear Interested Citizen

The Middle Fork Ranger District on the Willamette National Forest is now seeking comment on a variety of upcoming projects. The district will be preparing 14 Categorical Exclusions (CE) and they are comprised of:

- Frog Small Timber Sale
- Planting Fires 2017
- Home of Community Nature Special Use Permit
- Oakridge Transfer Station Improvements
- Weyerhaeuser Fall Creek Road Access
- Shadow Bay Water Replacement System
- Salt Creek Falls Recreation Maintenance Project
- Sand Prairie Campground and Waldo Lake Campgrounds Building Removal
- Clover Patch Connection
- Mt. Ray Trail Reroute
- Alpine Trail Reroute
- Bunchgrass Trail Connection
- Cowhorn Trail Cutoff
- Coal Creek Floodplain Restoration

Frog Small Timber Sale

Location: Approximately nine miles northeast of Oakridge, just south of the Huckleberry Lookout. This project is located in 14a General Forest of the Willamette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. The legal description is T20S, R4E, Sec 22 of the Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon.

Purpose and Need: This is a densely stocked stand, originally harvested 65 years ago. The stand is entirely in General Forest (14a), where the future goal is a healthy vigorous growing stand. The need for action is to reduce overstory tree density to promote residual tree growth and promote a healthy vigorous stand.

Project Lead

Christian Mercado

Middle Fork Ranger District, 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492-5210

christianmercado@fs.fed.us

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53676>



Planting 2017 Fires

Location: These project areas are located in several different Land Management Allocations of the Willamette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. These land management allocations are 16a Late Successional Reserves, 14a General Forest, 7 Old Growth Groves, 11c Scenic-Partial Retention Middleground, 10d Dispersed Recreation-Semiprimitive Nonmotorized, 5a Special Interest Areas and 12a Developed Recreation allocations, as well as 15 Riparian areas. The legal descriptions are T18S., R2E., Sections 1, 2, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27; T18S., R3E., Sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 28, and 29; T21S., R5E., Sections 20, 28, 29, and 32; T25S., R3E., Sections 12, 13 and 24; T25S., R4E., Sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 17, 18, and 19 of the Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon.

Purpose and Need: The purpose of this project is to re-establish forest cover and the need of this project is to meet the desired future conditions of forest cover for all and management allocations within the fire perimeters.

Project Lead

Lindsay Anderson

Middle Fork Ranger District, 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492-5210

ljelliot@fs.fed.us

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53680>

Homes of Community Nature Special Use Permit

Location: Approximately one mile northeast of the Oakridge airport. The project is located in 11c Scenic-Partial Retention Middleground of the Willamette National Forest land and Resource Management Plan. The legal description is T21S, R3E, sec 8 of the Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon.

Purpose and Need: The Special Use Permit for the Homes of Community Nature has expired. There is a need to renew the special use permit. This is an administrative action that would allow the continued use of the area for another 20 years.

Project Lead

McKenzie Jensen

Middle Fork Ranger District, 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492-5210

McKenzieJensen@fs.fed.us

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53679>

Oakridge Transfer Station Improvements

Location: Approximately three miles southeast of Oakridge. The project is located in 11f Scenic-Retention Foreground of the Willamette National Forest land and Resource management Plan. The legal description is T21S, R3E, Sec 26 of the Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon.

Purpose and Need: To better manage the increased refuse that comes to the site as well as increase the sites operational efficiency. Currently the site only has roll off containers which have been leading to a large number of trips in order to keep them empty. Additionally, the Special Use Permit for the transfer station has expired and is in need of a renewal.

Project Lead

McKenzie Jensen

Middle Fork Ranger District, 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492-5210

McKenzieJensen@fs.fed.us

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53897>

Weyerhaeuser Fall Creek Road Access

Location: Approximately 20 miles northwest of Oakridge. The project is located in 14a General Forest of the Willamette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. The legal description is T18S, R2E, Sec 19 and 30 of the Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon.

Purpose and Need: Weyerhaeuser Corporation has proposed to harvest a private unit just outside the Forest boundary. Forest Road 1817-413 is the easiest access to the top of this area for cable yarding. Using a temporary road approximately 100 feet would provide the best landing location for this operation.

Project Lead

Brian McGinley

Middle Fork Ranger District, 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492-5210

bmcginley@fs.fed.us

Shadow Bay Water Replacement System

Location: Approximately 20 miles east of Oakridge off of Highway 58 next to Lake Waldo. The project is located in 12a Developed Recreation of the Willamette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. The legal description is T22S, R6E, Sec 6 of the Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon.

Purpose and Need: Shadow Bay is one of the largest and busiest campgrounds on Middle Fork Ranger District. The current water system at Shadow Bay is a surface water system that draws from Waldo Lake. The filters to maintain the system are expensive and the intake to the system has had issues with clogging. The distribution system pipes are beginning to develop leaks since it is an older system. The desired future condition is to have sustainable groundwater system.

Project Lead

McKenzie Jensen

Middle Fork Ranger District, 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492-5210

McKenzieJensen@fs.fed.us

Salt Creek Falls Recreation Maintenance Project

Location: Approximately 15 miles East of Oakridge. The project is located in 12a Developed Recreation of the Willamette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. The legal description is T23S, R5.5E, Sec 4 of the Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon.

Purpose and Need: Salt Creek Falls is the most popular recreation site on the Middle Fork Ranger District. The trail leading to the bottom overlook was destroyed by a landslide. The pedestrian trails around Salt Creek Falls have been slowly deteriorating. The railing around the parking lot and trails is eroding and needs to be replaced. The stair case leading to and from the viewpoints is chipping and causing possible tripping hazards. The trail in a few key locations is being undercut and eroding away. It is the responsibility of the Forest Service to maintain the trails, and the site is part of the recreation fee site program. The desired future condition is to bring the facility back up to standard. There is also a need to replace the small bridge over Diamond Creek at the upper end of the Diamond Creek Falls Trail loop.

Project Lead

McKenzie Jensen

Middle Fork Ranger District, 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492-5210

McKenzieJensen@fs.fed.us

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53681>

Sand Prairie Campground, and Waldo Lake Campgrounds Building Removal

Location: Sand Prairie Campground is approximately nine miles south of Oakridge and Shadow Bay Campground is approximately 20 miles east of Oakridge next to Lake Waldo. The projects are located in 12a Developed Recreation of the Willamette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. The legal description for Sand Prairie is T23S, R3E, Sec 4 of the Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon and for Islet and Shadow Bay are T21S, R6E, Sec 16 and T22S, R6E, Sec 6.

Purpose and Need: These campgrounds have old flush toilet buildings that are no longer used. The old restrooms have been replaced with CXT vault toilets. Since the buildings no longer serve a purpose the district is recommending removal. The proposal is to remove the buildings and return the area to its natural state.

Project Lead

McKenzie Jensen

Middle Fork Ranger District, 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492-5210

McKenzieJensen@fs.fed.us

Clover Patch Connection

Location: Approximately 5 miles northwest of Oakridge. The project is located in 11a Scenic Modification- Modification Middleground and 14a General Forest of the Willamette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. The legal description is T20S, R2E, Sec 23 of the Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon.

Purpose and Need: Currently, there is not a trail connecting one segment of trail (Cloverpatch 3457) to the Cloverpatch Tie (3457.1). Also there is not a trail connecting Cloverpatch Tie to the Alpine Trail (3450). The district is proposing to build those two segments to complete an all-day mountain bike loop of approximately 30 miles and to get trail users off of the road system and back onto trail systems.

Project Lead

Kevin Rowell

Middle Fork Ranger District, 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492-5210

karowell@fs.fed.us

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53683>

Mt. Ray Trail (3682) Reroute

Location: Approximately 18 miles East of Oakridge. The project is located in 1 Wilderness of the Willamette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. The legal description is T22S, R5.5E, Sec 14 of the Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon.

Purpose and Need: There is a 0.33 mile segment of Mount Ray Trail that is too steep and is heavily rutted due to its fall-line alignment. The District is proposing to solve that alignment problem by rerouting the trail on gentle grades to prevent further impacts to the trail, soils and nearby water.

Project Lead

Kevin Rowell

Middle Fork Ranger District, 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492-5210

karowell@fs.fed.us

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53684>

Alpine Trail Reroute

Location: Approximately nine miles north of Oakridge. The project is located in 11a Scenic-Modification Middleground of the Willamette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. The legal description is T21S, R3E, Sec 6 of the Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon.

Purpose and Need: Currently the Alpine Trail overlaps with a section of Forest Service road 5828-585 for ¼ mile. The road is within a Burnt Stewardship harvest unit and the district wants to move the trail to improve the trail experience and aesthetics as well as to avoid future logging impacts to the trail.

Project Lead

Kevin Rowell

Middle Fork Ranger District, 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492-5210

karowell@fs.fed.us

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53689>

Bunchgrass Trail Connection

Location: Approximately 15 miles east of Oakridge . The project is located in 14a General Forest and 10c Semi-primitive Non-motorized of the Willamette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. The legal description is T22S, R5.5E, Sections 9, 15, and 16 of the Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon.

Purpose and Need: Currently, there is not a non-Wilderness trail connection between the popular bike packing areas of the Willamette segment of the Oregon Timber Trail route. A single track connection between the Bunchgrass segment of the Eugene to Crest Trail (3559) and the Fuji Mountain Trail is needed to give mountain off-road bicyclists an option to access the Waldo Basin. This connection is being proposed in partnership with the Oregon Timber Trail Association to eliminate the need to ride on Forest Service Road 5883.

Project Lead

Kevin Rowell

Middle Fork Ranger District, 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492-5210

karowell@fs.fed.us

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53690>

Cowhorn Trail Cutoff

Location: Approximately 35 miles southeast of Oakridge. The project is located in 14a General Forest and Oregon Cascades Recreation Area 1 and 2 of the Willamette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. The legal description is T25S, R5.5E, Sections 10 and 11 of the Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon.

Purpose and Need: The Oregon Cascades Recreation Area is disconnected between the west and east sides (Willamette NF and Deschutes NF). No bike-legal single track route exists from the popular Timpanogas area to the Windy Lakes, so currently riders of the Oregon Timber Trail and other long distance routes must detour eight miles north around Summit Lake on Forest Service Road 6010 to connect the two trail systems. Furthermore, this proposed trail will also create a tidy 4-way junction with the PCT, reducing the potential for cyclists to illegally ride on the PCT where it parallels the 6010 road around Summit Lake.

Project Lead

Kevin Rowell

Middle Fork Ranger District, 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492-5210

karowell@fs.fed.us

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53692>

Coal Creek Floodplain Restoration

Location: Approximately 17 miles south of Oakridge. The project is located in 15 Riparian Areas of the Willamette National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan. The legal description is T24S, R3E, Sections 14 and 11 of the Willamette Meridian, Lane County, Oregon.

Purpose and Need: Coal Creek channel complexity and floodplain connectivity has been greatly reduced for over 50 years due to past management practices. As a result, lower Coal Creek lacks hydrologic complexity, and as a result aquatic and riparian habitat complexity, expected in a low gradient alluvial fan. The purpose of the Lower Coal Floodplain Restoration is to improve current aquatic and terrestrial habitat by (1) removing remnant constructed features that reduce channel complexity and restrict historic floodplain connectivity, (2) reconnect historic side-channels, and (3) stabilize and aggrade the stream bed.

Project Lead

Lisa Kurian

Middle Fork Ranger District, 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492-5210

lkurian@fs.fed.us

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53695>

My preliminary assessment are that these proposals fall within a category of actions per 36 CFR 220 that are excluded from documentation in an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and there are no extraordinary circumstances that would preclude use of the category.

- Frog Small Timber Sale: **36 CFR 220.6(e)(12)** "Harvest of live trees not to exceed 70 acres, requiring no more than ½ mile of temporary road construction.
- Planting Fires 2017: **36 CFR 220.6(e)(11)** "Post-fire rehabilitation activities, not to exceed 4,200 acres (such as tree planting, fence replacement, habitat restoration, heritage site restoration, repair of roads and trails, and repair of damage to minor facilities such as campgrounds.), to repair or improve lands unlikely to recover to a management approved condition from wildland fire damage, or to repair or replace minor facilities damaged by fire.
- Home of Community Nature Special Use Permit: **36 CFR 220.6(e)(15)** "Issuance of a new special use authorization when the only changes are administrative, there are not changes to the authorized facilities or increases in the scope or intensity of authorized activities, and the applicant or holder is in full compliance with the terms and conditions of the special use authorization.
- Oakridge Transfer Station Improvements: **36 CFR 220.6(e)(3)** "Approval, modification, or continuation of minor special uses of NFS lands that require less than five contiguous acres of land.
- Weyerhaeuser Fall Creek Road Access: **36 CFR 220.6(d)(4)** "Repair and maintenance of roads, trails, and landline boundaries."
- Shadow Bay Water Replacement System, Sand Prairie Campground and Waldo Lake Campgrounds Building Removal: **36 CFR 220.6(d)(5)** "Repair and maintenance of recreation sites and facilities."

- Salt Creek Falls Recreation Maintenance Project, Clover Patch Connection, Mt. Ray Reroute, Alpine Trail Reroute, Bunchgrass Trail Connection, Cowhorn Trail Cutoff:**36 CFR 220.6(e)(1)** “Construction and reconstruction of trails.”
- Coal Creek Floodplain Restoration: **36 CFR 220.6(e)(18)** “Restoring wetlands, streams, riparian areas or other water bodies by removing, replacing, or modifying water control structures such as, but not limited to, dams, levees, dikes, ditches, culverts, pipes, drainage tiles, valves, gates, and fencing, to allow waters to flow into natural channels and floodplains and restore natural flow regimes to the extent practicable where valid existing rights and special use authorizations are not unilaterally altered or canceled.”

This comment period is intended to provide those interested in or affected by this proposal an opportunity to provide early and meaningful participation on a proposed action prior to a decision being made by the Responsible Official.

How to Comment and Timeframe

Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, and electronic comments concerning these actions will be accepted until June 8, 2018.

Written comments must be submitted to: Responsible Official, or Allen Hambrick, NEPA Planner, 46375 Highway 58 Westfir, OR 97492. The office business hours for those submitting hand-delivered comments are: 8:30am to 4:30pm Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Persons commenting should include: 1) name, address, telephone number, organization represented, if any; 2) title of project for which the comment is being submitted; and 3) specific facts and supporting reasons for the Responsible Official to consider.

Electronic comments must be submitted in a format such as an email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.docx) should be sent to afhambrick@fs.fed.us. It is the responsibility of persons providing comments to submit them by the close of the comment period.

If you have any questions or need further information regarding these proposals, contact the project leads which are listed with the description of the projects above.

Sincerely,



Acting District Ranger

Brett Blundon

Middle Fork Ranger District

