

PAM MARSH
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 5
SOUTHERN JACKSON COUNTY



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

October 31, 2019

Lauren Brown, Ashland Field Office Manager
John Schumacher, Planning and Environmental Specialist
Medford District Bureau of Land Management
3040 Biddle Road
Medford, OR 97504
BLM_OR_AFO_VMP@blm.gov

Re: Bear Grub Vegetation Management Project scoping comments

Dear Ms. Brown & Mr. Schumacher:

I am contacting you on behalf of constituents from Oregon House District 5, which includes portions of the Applegate and Bear Creek watersheds, who have reached out to me to express concerns about the Bear Grub VMP, particularly regarding impacts to homes, recreation areas and businesses in the communities near Ruch, Sterling Creek, Little Applegate, China Gulch and Forest Creek.

Residents of the Applegate are among my most engaged and focused constituents who care deeply about forestry issues, environmental impacts and quality of life. Because project plans include removing older forest canopy, logging in riparian (streamside) reserves and building new logging roads, I anticipate that the project will receive sustained attention from the community. In addition to the wildlife and water quality impacts, I am concerned that logging large, old trees will make forests less resilient to climate change.

I am pleased to learn that one of the project goals is addressing fire hazards. The projected increase of wildfire frequency and severity in Southern Oregon calls for an “all hands on deck” approach to forest management that helps protect communities and natural resources. A small-diameter thinning project could help to reduce fire risk, community impacts and environmental degradation, creating a win-win scenario for rural residents, workers and

wildlife. As plans for the project take shape, please employ strategies that create fire resilient forests, and which help landscapes, wildlife and people adapt to climate change.

While BLM gathers input on the potential impacts, issues and alternatives, I strongly encourage you to identify community partners, to engage in meaningful collaboration, and to give sincere consideration to the input and ideas submitted by neighbors.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pam Marsh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pam Marsh
Representative House District 05
Southern Jackson County