

File Code: 1350

Date: February 14, 2020

Oregon State Senate Committee on Wildfire Reduction and Recovery

Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street, NE, Room 347
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Committee,

As Chief of the Forest Service, I recognize the bold and innovative leadership Oregon is taking to enhance collaboration with federal agencies towards reducing wildfire risk and improving forest health. Our collective efforts benefit not only public lands but the broader Oregon and regional landscapes which include private lands and local communities. The Forest Service has invested, and continues to invest, in shared work to benefit federal and state-managed lands and the American public.

The State of Oregon and the Forest Service face similar challenges and share many of the same priorities, as stewards of public lands, to reduce wildfire risk and better protect our local communities; increase active management on our forests; and expand economic opportunities in local communities. Each of these shared priorities highlights how interdependent we are and how important it is for state and federal officials to work closely to collaborate across jurisdictional boundaries and leverage our collective resources.

For example, the Greater La Pine Basin Cohesive Strategy Project, on the Deschutes National Forest, has treated over 45,000 acres and invested nearly \$6.1 million in federal funding to improve forest health conditions; and will provide future investments of approximately \$18.5 million to treat an additional 77,000 acres. Two projects on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, the Waters Creek Project and the Butcher Knife/Slate Creek Project, have treated nearly 11,000 acres with an investment of approximately \$4.6 million; and over 6,500 acres will be treated in the future, investing an additional \$1.1 million to improve forest health conditions. The Wallowa Whitman National Forest and the East Face Project has treated nearly 20,000 acres with an investment of \$8.7 million; and the remaining work includes treating almost 22,000 acres with a future investment of over \$11 million to improve forest health conditions. These projects are examples of how we leverage our resources to deliver additional investments that benefit Oregon forests, beyond our base funding, which covers the wide range of forest health and wildfire risk reduction treatments.



The Forest Service is continuing to step up our efforts and is fully committed to engage with our state partners to identify and pursue shared priorities for cross-boundary, landscape-scale restoration projects through the Oregon Shared Stewardship Memorandum of Understanding (August 2019). The lands we manage and the Oregon communities that cherish and depend on them are inherently interconnected. The more effectively we collaborate across boundaries, the better equipped we will be to address our shared challenges and support together this essential work.

I look forward to continuing to work with our state partners using all available authorities to advance shared stewardship of Oregon's forests and grasslands.

Sincerely,


VICTORIA CHRISTIANSEN
Chief

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