

File Code: 1950
Date: September 17, 2021

Dear Interested Citizen:

The Grandview Fire burned approximately 5,943 acres of the Crooked River National Grassland (hereafter, the Grassland) of the Ochoco National Forest about ten miles northeast of Sisters, Oregon in July 2021. This includes about 1,488 acres of private land and about 4,455 acres of National Forest System lands. The fire resulted in a high percentage of damaged, dead, dying, and unstable trees and snags of mainly ponderosa pine and juniper throughout most of the burned area, including adjacent to open Forest Service system roads. The Grassland proposes to fell and remove roadside danger trees along approximately 7.9 miles of roads in the Grandview Fire area. The legal location of the proposed work includes Sections 10, 16, 20-22, 27, 28, and 33, T. 13 S., R. 11 E. See the attached vicinity and project area maps.

There is a need to provide safe access on open Forest Service system roads for the public, private landowners, and government employees who use these roads for recreation, access to private property, and conducting official government work. The purpose of this proposal is to mitigate the hazard that the roadside fire-damaged trees in the Grandview Fire burned area pose to users of the area by removing such trees along about 7.9 miles of open Forest Service system roads.

Roads proposed for danger tree mitigation occur in two management areas as described in the Grassland 1989 Land and Resource Management Plan: Metolius Deer Winter Range which emphasizes management for big game winter range habitat and the Whychus Creek Management Area which emphasizes semi-primitive nonmotorized recreation. Roads proposed for danger tree mitigation are shown in the table below. All miles proposed for commercial removal of ponderosa pine are also proposed for non-saw timber removal to address juniper and smaller material.

Road Number	Miles of commercial removal of	Miles of non-saw timber
6355100	.5	1.2
JEF-749	2.1	2.1
6355102	.8	.8
JEF-536 – Grandview	.3	.3
6355000	0	.1
JEF-3-11 – SW Geneva	.8	1.4
JEF-590 – Squaw Flat Rd	.2	.2
PU-3121	.6	.8
JEF-591 – SW Geneva Rd	1.0	1.0
Total	6.3	7.9

The segments of Road PU-3121 and Road Jef-3-11 proposed for danger tree mitigation are adjacent to the Deschutes/Steelhead Canyon Roadless Area. Road PU-3121 is a main access road into the Whychus Creek Management Area, is the main means of west-side access to get to the roadless area and accesses a popular dispersed campground and day use area.

Danger tree mitigation will occur through commercial removal of about 243 acres of dead and dying roadside ponderosa pine and non-saw timber removal of about 400 acres of dead and dying roadside juniper (of all sizes) and ponderosa pine (generally ≤ 10 inches diameter). The non-saw timber material would be disposed of through potentially a small commercial firewood sale, by allowing personal use firewood cutting, or special forest product removal (i.e., decorative wood). The proposed area is not currently open to personal use firewood cutting. Felling and removal would be limited to trees that are a danger to the road (danger



trees, dead trees, and trees that are likely to die within three years and would become danger trees) per guidelines in the “Field Guide for Danger-Tree Identification and Response along Forest Roads and Work Sites in Oregon and Washington.”¹

Field Guide for Danger-Tree Identification and Response along Forest Roads and Work Sites in Oregon and Washington About 95% of the trees in the proposed mitigation areas are dead and the remaining 5% that are considered dying will be evaluated using the Region 6 guide “Post-fire Assessment for Tree Status and Marking Guidelines for Conifers in Oregon and Washington.”² The Grassland will consult with the Forest Health Protection Specialists to assist with recommendations, review and provide project specific design to meet land management objectives.

The Grassland anticipates documenting the environmental considerations in a decision memo using a categorical exclusion based on the scope, scale, and proposed activities of this project. Resource protection measures and best management practices will be developed by an interdisciplinary team of resource specialists using best available scientific information and input obtained through the public scoping process. These measures will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- The project will not establish new roads; danger tree mitigation areas will be accessed by existing roads.
- Trees felled within Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas (RHCAs) would be left on the ground where needed for large woody debris.
- Danger tree mitigation is not proposed near any perennial stream (i.e., Whychus Creek).
- Invasive plant prevention measures would be followed including equipment cleaning.
- Any slash piling or scattering would avoid sensitive sites.

If you would like to submit written comments in response to this proposal, they would be most helpful if submitted prior to October 1, 2021 to the following online comment form: <https://cara.ecosystem-management.org/Public//CommentInput?Project=60736>. Comments may also be mailed to Brianna Goehring, NEPA Planner, Ochoco National Forest, 3160 NE Third St., Prineville, OR 97754. If you wish to hand-deliver comments, please call the Forest Service at (541) 416-6500 to make an appointment due to current Covid-19 restrictions.

The project webpage is located at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=60736>.

Thank you for your time and interest in our project.

Sincerely,

/s/ Slater R Turner
SLATER R. TURNER
District Ranger

Enclosure: Vicinity and project area maps

¹ Filip, G., M. Barger, J. Bronson, K. Chadwick, R. Collins, B. Goodrich, H. Kearns, M. McWilliams, B. Oblinger, D. Omdal, A. Ramsey, A. Saavedra. 2016. Field Guide for Danger-Tree Identification and Response along Forest Roads and Work Sites in Oregon and Washington. R6-NR-TP-021-2016. USDA. Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region, Forest Health Protection, Portland, OR. 124p.

²Hood, S., I. Ragenovich, and B. Schaupp. 2020. Post-fire Assessment for Tree Status and Marking Guidelines for Conifers in Oregon and Washington. R6-FHP-RO-2020-02. USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region, Forest Health Protection, Portland, OR. 61p.