

To: John Gerritsma
From: [REDACTED]
Date: April 25, 2013
Re: Pilot Thompson Timber Sale

I would like to add my comments to others you might have received about the Pilot Thompson Timber Sale. In case the main points get lost in the prose, I have put them in bold, but the rest of the wording is important for both details and connotation, so I hope you will be patient with my expressions of concern.

As you know, my main concern is the unit next to my property, unit 25-7. My preference would be that you do nothing to the forest there, but I have little expectation of that. After that, **I would strongly urge this to be a stewardship unit.**

My preference would also be **not to put in a road**, as was the original plan for this unit. I cringe to think of cutting a road into that lovely forest. I am worried about increased motorcycle and ORV usage if a passage is opened between the logging road off Thompson Creek Road and the dirt road I live on. I am concerned about carving up the forest with even more roads. On the map this road is now marked as a "skid trail," which I assume is not a road. I hope this means that you have changed the original plan. In any case, you have promised that **the road, if built, would be gated and decommissioned** after use, so I am assuming that **a skid trail would also be eradicated after use.**

I am concerned about the general impact of logging on the land in this area. If you were just going to pluck out this tree and that one – the specific trees we noted as we walked through the unit together – that would perhaps be acceptable and maybe, as your ecologist believes, good for the forest. But as I envisioned the logging project more clearly, I began to see that that's not the way things work, that there would be scars all over the forest from the equipment used and many trees felled in order to take the ones wanted. I would ask that **as little heavy equipment be used as possible** and that that equipment be as light as possible. I know there are various kinds of equipment available; I would like this unit to be treated with the most gentle kind. As I understand it, the best way to assure this kind of treatment is if the **unit is designated a stewardship unit.**

A few days ago I walked up the road past the county's recent logging project. That road is now hot and open where it used to be shady and forested. Slash piles dot the sides of the road. Signs of logging remain like trash from a picnic. Is this what it's going to be like in the Owl Forest (as we called this unit while the children were growing up with it as their playground) after BLM's project? Again, if I thought the project would take a few trees and leave the forest more open but still existing as a forest ecology without other signs of destruction, I could live with the loss of the trees. But I'm afraid that after the loggers leave, the forest is going to look as scarred and trashed and beaten up as that other one is now.

In addition I would like to add my voice to Luke Ruediger's and others' in asking for the following actions:

(1) **Drop Unit 19-4** because it is an intact and fire-adapted forest and because felling these old, large trees will reduce canopy that provides nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat for the northern spotted owl. There should be no road built there.

(2) **Drop Unit 20-1**, which Luke Ruediger calls "probably the worst mark in the entire Pilot Thompson Timber Sale" due to the number of large trees marked for cut, the proposed tractor swing trail through the oak woodland above, and the extent of road renovation necessary on a road that is already beginning to return to the land.

(3) I agree with Luke's proposal to institute a **20" DBH upper diameter limit**.

(4) Because the helicopter logging proposed in **Alternative 3** removes a large amount of northern spotted owl habitat, this alternative **should not be accepted**.

(5) I echo the cry of many of us concerned about this sale: **no new roads**.

Thank you for taking the time to walk through unit 25-7 with me several times. Thanks also to Stephanie Kelleher for her help. Thank you for listening to my views in this letter. Because I hike often in these mountains, because I live among them and have been here for more than forty years, because I write about these mountains and my life in them (as in my latest book, *Favorite Hikes of the Applegate*), because I care about the forest ecology, especially here in the Applegate, because I believe that we are but one kind of creature among the many who live here – for many reasons I fervently hope that you will not only take into consideration but act on the concerns of citizens who care enough to comment on this action in our neighborhood and who no doubt represent the views of many who care but were not able to write.