

## Project – North Fork Smith

### Building Late-Successional Habitat Connectivity Across the Landscape

**Request:** *Consideration of including something about addressing building late-successional habitat connectivity across the landscape for a variety of wildlife species and ecosystem functions in the project purpose and needs. In terms of responding to [this request] that might call for additional analysis, it would be great if you all could explain the scope of analysis and some of the reasoning for not completing additional analysis.*

Our approach is at a watershed scale with proposed actions focused mainly on USFS-administered lands. Landscape-level analysis to look at connectivity across multiple landownerships and respective management approaches are beyond the scope of the purpose and need for the project. The project will consider connectivity in terms of spotted owl/marbled murrelet management at the watershed scale and maybe a bit farther outside of the watershed as determined by analysis. Connectivity at a larger landscape-scale may be discussed conceptually in the analysis, but outside the scope of analysis and project.

Because of the new page and time limit regulations for EAs, we are being very conscious about focusing our analysis on what is absolutely necessary. Proper design of the proposed actions would ensure that there are no unacceptable direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts at the watershed scale or at a scale that is appropriate for a specific resource and/or species (cumulative impacts). This would ensure that there are no unacceptable impacts on a larger scale.

It might help if the collaborative: Define what connectivity means to them? What does it look like? How is it different than current conditions? How is it different than the desired future conditions detailed in the Siuslaw Landscape Resource Management Plan as amended by the Northwest Forest Plan?

### Recreation Analysis

**Request:** *Analysis of recreation opportunities and impact of the project on recreation use in the area*

There are more recreation opportunities in this area than we typically have compared our past watersheds restoration projects, including the Kentucky Fall Special Interest Area and trail and the Sweet Creek Trail. We acknowledge this and will provide an adequate analysis.

This request ties with the next request concerning future recreation opportunities in the project area.

### Proposed Wild and Scenic Rivers

**Request:** *Senator Wyden's newly introduced River Democracy Act includes Kentucky Creek and the North Fork Smith River as proposed Wild & Scenic Rivers. Should this bill pass, management of these streams and the ½ mile corridors on either side of them, must ensure maintenance or enhancement of their designated values. While not currently the law of the land, I think it is important to consider the potential for needing to manage these corridors differently in the future and to "do no harm" to these values with planned management.*

We are having conversations at the forest level on how to address the proposed legislation. In these situations, we typically don't move forward with any action that would preclude these types of areas from being designated as proposed. What that looks like in this analysis is unknown at this time.

### Carbon Storage

**Request:** *Consideration of planned activities on carbon storage and expected effects on climate change, and how planned activities will contribute to mitigating expected effects*

Our direction has consistently been to use standard language prepared by the region. We are not avoiding the concern, nor do we think climate change is not important. Climate change is a topic that the

Forest Service is talking about and working on at the regional level. The USFS Region 6 has developed a climate change toolkit that can be found at the link below.

[U.S. Forest Service Region 6 Climate Change Toolkit](#)

(<https://usfs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/PublicGallery/index.html?appid=617decaf7be945a39eb7f65eae64de21>)

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Adjacent Ownership

**Request:** *Consideration of adjacent/surrounding land ownership and management to inform USFS process.*

Impacts to National Forest lands from adjacent lands are taken into account from an existing condition standpoint. We are being very conscious about not completing any additional analysis that is not absolutely necessary for the EA. This includes cumulative effects.

The USDA Bureau of Land Management (BLM) provides a website that can be used to view specific web layers such as land ownership, planning, vegetation treatments and surveys, and more (<https://www.blm.gov/services/geospatial/GISData/oregon>).