

Forest Supervisor Richard Periman
Mount Hood National Forest
70220 E Highway 26
Zigzag, OR 97049

October 11, 2019

Dear Forest Supervisor Periman,

Climate change is exacerbating forest health issues and watershed conditions in the ecosystems surrounding Mount Hood. Hotter dryer summers, longer wildfire seasons, drought stress, changes in stream flow and temperature, and increased risk of insect and disease outbreaks have the potential to fundamentally shift the composition and function of our forests. These changes pose risks to human communities, fish, wildlife, and critical ecosystem services including drinking watersheds and the host of timber and non-timber resource values provided by forests.

Members of the Hood River Forest Collaborative, Wasco County Forest Collaborative, and Clackamas Stewardship Partners – the three forest collaboratives on the Mount Hood National Forest – are writing to express our support for the USDA Forest Service Climate Vulnerability Assessments currently being conducted on the Mount Hood National Forest and Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area. The Sandy River Watershed Council is also included as a signee to this letter, since the area they work within Mt. Hood National Forest is outside the geographic purview of the three existing collaborative groups.

The results of the assessments have the potential to inform collaborative and community-based planning efforts in the region. Forest collaboratives regularly meet and work with the Ranger Districts to plan and implement forest management and restoration activities. At the county level – Wasco County and Clackamas County are both in the midst of long-term resilience and climate change adaptation planning efforts. Across the state and country there are on-going conversations about the role of forests in mitigating the effects of a changing climate.

Despite the critical importance of the Climate Vulnerability Assessment there is a lack of coordinated efforts to meaningfully engage stakeholders in the work and to share the results with members of the public. Your collaborative partners on the Mount Hood National Forest are writing to express our strong support for opportunities to engage in the assessment process and hear what you are learning through this important work.

The collaboratives are willing to serve as a resource to help you coordinate public engagement and share information and resources. As groups of many varied interests and experiences of Mt. Hood National Forest, we believe that an understanding of the information included in the assessments is critical to the future work of our organizations and would produce a high level of interest from Mt. Hood's users in general. That is why we would support a future public event held in a central location to communities surrounding Mt. Hood which would highlight the

results of this important process.

The Wasco County Forest Collaborative and Hood River Forest Collaborative are hosting a joint meeting in the fall of 2019 and we invite you to share the Assessment and your plans for distribution at that time. The Clackamas Stewardship Partners as well as the Sandy River Watershed Council meet on a monthly basis and would be happy to have you share your process at your earliest convenience.

Please don't hesitate to contact collaborative coordinators, Andrew Spaeth and Robert Roth, if you have any questions or would like to discuss further. We look forward to engaging with you through the rest of the assessment process. Let us know how we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,



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CC:
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