Felice Pace

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June 10, 2025

Chris Christofferson, Supervisor
Natalie Kelly, District Ranger
Scott River Ranger District
Klamath National Forest
Via Email

Dear Chris Christofferson and Natalie Kelly.

We, the individual and organizations listed at the end of this letter, write today because you, in your capacity as managers of the Klamath National Forest, have proposed to reconstruct roads which blew out in a recent storm event. We note that many of the roads the Forest Service reconstructs after storm blow-outs have blown out many times before because they are located on unstable slopes and because you as Forest Service mangers do not have the funds to maintain them to applicable standards. Applicable science strongly suggests that reconstructing these unstable and poorly maintained roads is a recipe for continued watershed and fisheries degradation. Roads which are prone to blow out in storm events are a menace to watershed health. They should be hydrologically decommissioned and put to bed.

We want to remind you that the Klamath Forest Alliance won a lawsuit and set a court precedent in 1999 which established that the Forest Service can use off-budget road funding to decommission, as well as to reconstruct, roads which blow out repeatedly in major storm events. That is the right thing to do in this case and it is what we urge you to do.

In particular, road 46N65 in the Walker Creek Watershed should not be reconstructed. As shown in the photo at the end of this letter, many roads in the Walker Creek Watershed have blown-out multiple times, each time delivering large amounts of salmon-killing fine sediment to our streams. These regular, periodic blow-outs prevent Walker Creek from regaining health; they keep Walker Creek degraded and that hurt the salmon, aquatic ecosystems and wildlife your have sworn to protect.

Attached to this letter are links to two items:

- The Case for Destroying Old Forest Roads, from the magazine *Science*, March 2024
- Press Clip from 1999 titled “Federal Judge Halts Road Reconstruction in Klamath National Forest.

These items present the scientific consensus and legal precedent for using off-budget federal roads funding to decommission salmon-killing roads on public lands.

Many of the roads you propose to reconstruct have blown out in previous storms because they are located on unstable slopes prone to landsliding. These roads magnify the risk of blow outs which occur during every major storm event, delivering tons of fine salmon-killing sediment to our streams. Reconstructing the unstable roads which blow out in storms will result in an ongoing failure to recover healthy aquatic ecosystems and fisheries.

And that is the main reason we urge you not to reconstruct Road 46N65. Please do not reconstruct any storm-damaged roads which have a similar history of repeated failure in major storm events.

Sincerely,



Independent Activist

Denise Boggs, ED
Conservation Congress

Larry Glass, Public Lands Director
Northcoast Environmental Center

Tom Wheeler, ED
Environmental Protection Information Center

Attachment Links:

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