



File Code: 1950

Date: 8 August 2008

Dear Interested Citizens,

The Barlow Ranger District on the Mt. Hood National Forest has identified you as an individual, agency, or organization that might be interested in commenting on our proposal to reconstruct approximately 5500 feet of trail and rehabilitate sections of the existing Cooks Meadow Trail #639. The Cooks Meadow Trail System connects with numerous other trail opportunities. Destinations for scenic views are plenty. Objectives are to provide mountain bike, horse, and hiker access at the more/most difficult level. Visitors would experience panoramic views of Mt Hood with stands of old growth Douglas-fir.

### **Purpose and Need for Action**

The existing trail has been damaged by over use and past management activities. From these activities and from a lack of protection of the original tread, sections of this trail go directly up the fall line causing increased soil erosion. The trail has sustained grades greater than 30% on the north end. The purpose of this project is to provide trail related recreation opportunities that serve public needs and meet land management objectives while emphasizing the natural setting of the National Forest. There is a need to reconstruct a gentler grade trail that is designed with drain dips and reverse grades to minimize trail maintenance.

### **Proposed Action**

Approximately 5500 feet of the Cooks Meadow Trail would be reconstructed. Reconstruction would eliminate resource damage and reduce sediment into a key watershed. Trail reconstruction would consist of a clearing width limit of 36 to 48 inches, 8-foot height, and a tread width of 12 to 24 inches depending on side slope.

This project would establish better trail lay-out along numerous sections of trail. Sight distance would improve and climbing switchbacks at regular intervals would improve the section currently constructed down the fall line. Maintenance costs would decrease because problem areas would be relocated into areas where tread design would not need annual repair.

This trail would be a multi-user trail providing recreational opportunities for equestrians, hikers and mountain bike riders. Equestrian, hiker, and mountain bike organizations are supportive of this project and have indicated their interest in partnership agreements for trail maintenance. Implementation of this project would occur in Fall 2008.

**Decision to be Made:** The Barlow River District Ranger will decide whether to reconstruct / rehabilitate the Cooks Meadow Trail # 639. The project will be analyzed under category 4: "Repair and maintenance of roads, trails, and landline boundaries" (FSH 1909.15-2007-1, 31.1, 2/15/07). The analysis for this project will be undertaken by an interdisciplinary team and



documented in a project file. If it is determined that no extraordinary circumstances exist (see FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30.3), the proposed project may be documented in a Decision Memo.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this proposal, please bring them to our attention by **August 25, 2008**. Send comments to Jim Thornton, 780 NE Court Street; Dufur, OR 97021. For more information, you may contact Jim Thornton at (541) 476-2291 or [jthornton@fs.fed.us](mailto:jthornton@fs.fed.us). Electronic comments may also be submitted to [commentspacificnorthwest-mthood-barlow@fs.fed.us](mailto:commentspacificnorthwest-mthood-barlow@fs.fed.us) in a format such as an e-mail message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc).

Sincerely,

*/s/ Michael J. Hernandez*  
MICHAEL J. HERNANDEZ  
District Ranger  
Enclosures