



ECOLA CREEK AWARENESS PROJECT
PO Box 181, Cannon Beach, OR 97110 (503) 436-0143

To: The Oregon Department of Forestry
From: Ecola Creek Awareness Project
Date: May 2, 2019
Re: Comments on 2020 Annual Operations Plan

Sent via E-mail

The Ecola Creek Awareness Project (ECAP) is an Oregon 501(c)(3) organization formed to recognize, promote increased public understanding of, and protect the unique environmental, economic and social values of the Ecola Creek watershed area. The proposed Norriston Heights Timber Sale documented in ODF's 2020 Annual Operations Plan would be within our greater watershed area, and is of great concern to us.

The Norriston Heights Timber Sale area is on an isolated ODF holding in close proximity to both Hug Point State Park and Arcadia Beach State Wayside, between Oswald West State Park to the south and Ecola State Park to the north. This area of the coast is one of the most scenic and most frequently visited areas in the State of Oregon. Visitors to our coast come for the natural bounty: the birds and wildlife, the waterfall at Hug point, the long sandy beach at Arcadia, and the recreational opportunities the forest and ocean provide. A State timber sale in this majestic area is not prudent, and would negatively affect the lucrative nature tourism we have worked to foster on the North Coast.

The Norriston Heights Timber Sale would result in the clearcutting of rare complex layered stands adjacent to occupied ESA listed Marbled Murrelet habitat. This 77 acre clearcut of publically owned trees (that have an average age of 68 years) would be adjacent to the largest cedar tree in Oregon. This ancient cedar and other trees in the stand are occupied by the ever more threatened Marbled Murrelets. It is time for ODF to help recover these threatened birds, not open up their habitat to predators that use clearcuts to access nests.

The southern section of the Norriston Heights Timber Sale area is in a geological hazard area prone to landslides. Highway 101 slumps and dips in this area, while coastal erosion simultaneously is taking out the base of this hillside. We believe ODF must consult with ODOT prior to any work in this area. The increased hydrological runoffs associated with clearcuts will more than likely worsen the situation, and could result in state infrastructure repair costs far greater than the timber sale revenue.

The Norriston Heights Timber Sale area contains streams that supply drinking water to families in the Picture Windows and Arcadia Sands neighborhoods. Water systems in this area already silt up after heavy rains, requiring manually removing the silt from intakes and water storage tanks. The silt increases the cost of filtering and treating the water. The proposed clearcut will certainly make matters worse for these families. Locally, the Forest Practices Act has been unable to protect drinking water systems in Arch Cape and Rockaway Beach. Let's not add Arcadia to this list.

Given the rare old growth stand immediately north of the proposed timber sale area, the presence of Marbled Murrelet, the proximity to multiple State Parks and an iconic stretch of the scenic Highway 101, the geological sensitivity of the area, and the community drinking water systems that may be compromised, we request that ODF manage this Norriston Heights Sale area for habitat to recover murrelets, or in the alternative, that you transfer the property to Oregon Parks and Recreation. The current clearcut proposal is truly unacceptable.

Sincerely,



President
Ecola Creek Awareness Project