

Tiger-Webb timber sale

The Forest Service is proposing 1,977 acres of commercial logging in the Tiger-Webb sale, with an additional 653 acres of non-commercial activities such as burning and pre-commercial logging.



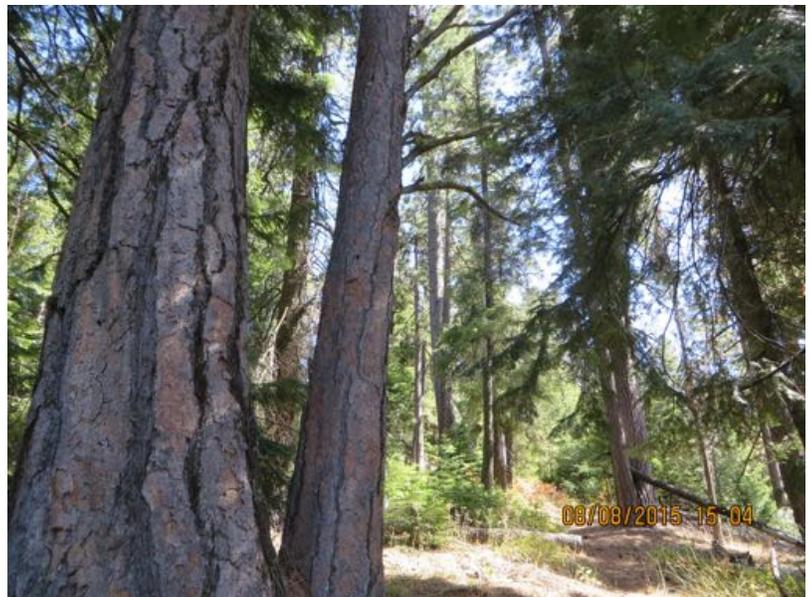
Columbia white-tailed deer in the Tiger-Webb sale

We field-checked the Tiger-Webb sale this past summer. We documented slopes that were often over 45 degrees in the Roadless Areas, and sighted species such as the American three-toed woodpecker, Columbia white-tailed deer, and Black bears. We surveyed nearly every sale unit, despite the extremely steep and rugged terrain. Field-checking here made for some of the most beautiful views of the summer—as well as the most challenging hikes resulting in the most tired volunteers.

The Tiger-Webb timber sale overlaps with the Tiger Creek Roadless Area, and the rugged landscape in the project area boasts scenic views and hiking trails. The USFS is proposing commercial logging within the Roadless Area, as well as over and adjacent to hiking trails. Many areas have had little or no previous logging. The Tiger Creek Roadless area meets the USFS's criteria for having "wilderness potential" (USFS 2010). Areas that qualify as Potential Wilderness are required by law to

be managed to maintain their Wilderness character until Congress can vote on whether or not to give the area full Wilderness designation. Logging within these areas may degrade their ecological functions and scenic character, and compromise their qualification for Wilderness designation.

We are very concerned that this project will degrade the Wilderness character of the area, fragment the Roadless area, log over and adjacent to recreational hiking trails, negatively impact wildlife habitats and corridors, and take needed forest density away from species that rely on it. The Tiger-Webb project area contains suitable habitat for Canada lynx, Gray wolves, American marten, Pileated woodpecker, Rocky mountain elk, and other species. Lower elevation areas serve as deer and elk over-wintering areas, while higher elevations provide deer and elk calving areas. The area also serves as an important wildlife corridor.



Mixed-conifer forest in the Tiger-Webb project.

The perennial streams in these canyons and in downstream Mill Creek provide unique and crucial habitats for fish and wildlife. Streams that flow year-round in this region are relatively rare and are therefore especially important for numerous species and the ecological integrity of the region. Tiger, Henry Canyon, and Webb Creeks—all within the project area-- support Redband trout and Summer steelhead. These streams feed into Mill Creek, which supports Bull trout as well. Mill Creek is approximately 1/4 mile downstream of the project area. Bull trout may be present in a small section of Tiger Creek (StreamNet, accessed 2015). Historically, the area also supported Chinook salmon (USFS 2010).



Richard in a roadless area in the Tiger-Webb sale.



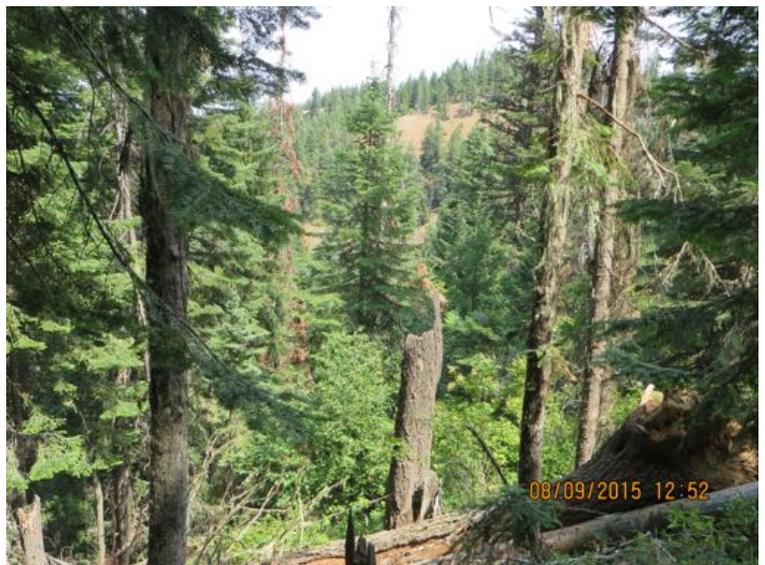
Bee in the Tiger-Webb sale

of the Cascades in Oregon and Washington depend on moist-mixed conifer forests and actually *require* relatively dense, fir-dominated forests. Examples of species in the project area that prefer mixed-conifer forests with higher density are Pileated woodpeckers and American marten. Deer and elk also require areas of high-density forests for hiding cover and for thermal insulation. In addition, many species are uniquely dependent on post-fire habitats that are created specifically by very hot, high-intensity fires. Black-backed woodpeckers, for example, rely almost entirely on post-burn habitat created by stand-replacement high-intensity fires that have burned within a few years. Black-backed woodpeckers and three-toed woodpeckers also rely on dense beetle-killed forests.

In addition to thoroughly field-checking the area, we also submitted scoping comments on the proposed sale. We will continue to keep the public updated and engaged on the timber sale, and continue to fight hard to preserve this area.

Logging on extremely steep slopes above creeks in the project area will increase fine sediments in streams beyond natural levels, thereby degrading water quality and negatively affecting already struggling fish populations. Bull trout, Redband trout, and Steelhead trout all rely on clear and cold water. Redband trout are listed as state Sensitive species, and occupy only a fraction of their historic range. Bull trout are listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) as Threatened. They are at heightened risk of loss of genetic diversity due to shrinking populations and loss of connectivity, and particularly vulnerable to climate change. Threats to this species include degraded water quality, loss of water supply to creeks, shrinking snowpacks, and de-watering of creeks due to climate change and to management such as over-grazing and logging. Bull trout, Redband trout, Steelhead trout and other aquatic species need to have their habitats preserved, not logged, in order to persist and survive into future generations.

The Forest Service is using fire risk reduction to justify logging in this area. However, the mixed-conifer forests that occur in this area are naturally dense, with infrequent fires that were historically high intensity. The Tiger-Webb project area is composed of primarily mixed-conifer forests, including tree species such as Grand fir and Douglas fir. The ridge tops include higher-elevation moist mixed-conifer forests. In their inventory of Potential Wilderness areas, the USFS includes this description of the area: “[t]he terrain is steep with year round streams...The year round streams create complex riparian vegetation, sometimes like that seen in the Cascades” (USFS 2010). Many species that occur east



Mixed-conifer forest in the Tiger-Webb project.

Citations:

StreamNet Database Query, accessed 2015. Most data citations within StreamNet were from ODFW or WDFW. StreamNet is an online project of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission. <http://snq.streamnet.org/>

United States Forest Service, 2010. Umatilla National Forest Review of Areas with Wilderness Potential. Accessed online December 2015: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/wallowa-whitman/landmanagement/planning/?cid=stelprd3798047>



Roadless and steep terrain in the Tiger-Webb timber sale.



Sophie with large Ponderosa pine in the Tiger-Webb timber sale.