

Date: October 3, 2019

Topic: Open Forest – Online Christmas tree permit pilot

Audience: Region 6 Law Enforcement Officers on participating pilot forests.

General Information about Open Forest (<https://openforest.fs.usda.gov/>)

- Open Forest is an online system that offers the convenience of purchasing a Christmas tree permit from the comfort of one's own home, or anywhere using a mobile device.
- The system is being developed over a multi-year timespan that involves iterative user (Forest Service employees and the public) testing of the system, to continually learn and improve the customer experience.
- Last year, 2018, was the initial launch of the pilot. Participating forests included Mt. Hood (R6), Shoshone (R2), Arapaho-Roosevelt (R2), and Flathead (R1). We are entering the second year of the pilot, and Region 6 is the only region adding new forests to the system this year. There are a total of 13 Forests across R1, R2, and R6 participating in 2019.
- Each pilot forest has main points of contact who are informed of, and guiding the flow of information about the Open Forest pilot on their forest, shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Open Forest R6 pilot forests and main points of contact.

Forest	Open Forest Points of Contact
Deschutes	Brian Tandy and Jeremy Fields.
Ochoco	Brian Tandy, Kevin Keown, and Beccie Sakraida.
Fremont-Winema	Annette Shullanberger, and Seana Lammers.
Umatilla	Deb Gutierrez, and Darcy Weseman.
Rogue River-Siskiyou	Anna McGovern, and Robert Barnhart.
Willamette	Christian Mercado
Okanogan-Wenatchee	Leo Silva, K.D. Langston, Alisha Toombs, and Terri Jump.
Mt. Baker Snoqualmie	Rebecca Busscher
Gifford Pinchot	Joe Gates, and Robin Rose.
Mt. Hood (2 nd year participant)	Jason Page, Mark Terhune, and Bob Gill.

Tactical Information about the Open Forest Christmas tree permit

- Participating pilot forests will have TWO types of Christmas tree permits out in the field; Open Forest printed ones, and traditional over-the-counter issued tags.
- Open Forest permits do not replace the traditional over-the-counter issued tags.
- Open Forest permits must be printed to be valid.
- Open Forest permits show: Permit holder name, a termination date, unique permit number, Christmas tree measurement specifications, a checked box stating that the permit holder agreed to and understood the rules for Christmas tree cutting, and permit validation instructions.
- Open Forest permits require permit holders to enter the MM and DD of the date they are removing their tree; validating permit before transport.
- Open Forest permits are not designed to be attached to the tree – they must be placed on the vehicle dashboard.
- One Open Forest printed permit can be valid for up to 5 trees depending on forest rules/limits and quantity purchased.

Other Information

- It's always LEO discretion in the field. We learned that last year out of almost 5,000 permits issued, there were a handful of people who had their permit on their mobile device, not printed.
- We do not have a way of looking up individual names in the Open Forest system, only individual permit numbers. Open Forest does not yet store PII in a retrievable way.





- The same general risks persist with the Open Forest permit system as exist in the over-the-counter process (i.e., someone can purchase over the limit, someone can duplicate the permit, the only way we can verify a permit is through permit number).

Next Steps

- Share your feedback with the Open Forest team (amber.sprinkle@usda.gov or aaron.burk@usda.gov)
- The Open Forest team relies heavily on LEO feedback (LEO perspective, and customer interactions around the permit) during the pilot season for improvement opportunities.
- The Open Forest team would like to know how the permit and/or the process could be improved to benefit LEO workload and customer interaction.
- A demonstration of the site can be offered to LEOs prior to November 1, 2019 so that LEOs can be aware of the process individuals would go through to obtain a Christmas tree permit online. A demonstration takes 15 minutes.

Attachments:

Sample of the Open Forest permit that is received in email, and offered for printing from the confirmation page.

Sample of the Rules that is received in the email, and is offered for printing from the confirmation page.

Sample of the Email that would be received after completing a purchase.

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