



July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Colville National Forest  
Forest Plan Revision  
765 South Main St.  
Colville, WA 99114

Dear Forest Plan Revision Team:

Vaagen Bros. Lumber operates two sawmills on the Colville National Forest and is reliant on timber from the Forest to keep these mills running and to keep the more than 150 people directly employed by the mills and numerous others indirectly employed in the industry working.

After reviewing the draft Forest Plan, we feel that it could do more to assure supply of the timber volume needs of the local timber industry infrastructure, better address the massive restoration needs of the forest, and we feel that there is confusion about the assessment of potential timber production, particularly that some analyses were done assuming future budgetary constraints.

It doesn't seem that the draft Plan provides for a pace and scale of restoration necessary to get the Colville National Forest to the desired conditions stated by the Forest itself. The number of acres planned for treatment and harvest is miniscule and by some estimates, it will take over 70 years to get the necessary acres treated.

There is a broad base of support for increased timber harvest levels on the Colville, including local timber industry, government officials, and the Northeast Washington Forest Coalition. These groups have mutually approved a harvest level of 80 MMBF. Why isn't that reflected in the Draft Plan and why isn't there an alternative that elevates harvest to this level? Even a temporary departure from a lower harvest level would help to get the Forest back in balance and "catch up" with the historic backlog of mismanaged acres.

Given the critical reliance of the local timber infrastructure on products produced by the Colville National Forest, it would seem that a heavier weighting would be given to maintaining these businesses and the critical jobs they provide. The three counties where the Colville National Forest resides have the highest unemployment rates in the state of Washington.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and I look forward to seeing a Forest Plan that will provide solid and productive guidance on the Colville National Forest for the coming years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josh Anderson".

Josh Anderson  
Vice President of Timber Resources

VAAGEN BROS. LUMBER, INC.

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