

February 9, 2021

Mr. Jeffrey Rivera, District Ranger
Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest/Wenatchee River Ranger District
c/o Paul Kelley
600 Sherborne Street, Leavenworth, WA 98826

Dear Jeff,

I have been a full time resident in Plain/Lake Wenatchee for three years and in that time I joined Lake Wenatchee Fire & Rescue to serve my community and to learn more about wild land fire and forest health/resiliency. I walk the forested areas surrounding Plain/Lake Wenatchee often and can say with certainty, our community remains in the midst of a forest that is compromised of disease and misguided forest health management. I am fully aware of the UWPP and the project's efforts to consider the health of our forests and wildlife. As a private citizen wild land fire frightens me immensely. The loss of all that comprise a healthy ecosystem, including air, water, soil, 2- and 4-leggeds can disappear in a single catastrophic event. I urge you and the USFS to mitigate this danger by implementing solid management practices and a wholistic approach of returning our forests and that which thrives within our forests to a healthy status immediately.

I urge you to consider the following:

1. The highest risk areas are around the community and private lands. The project needs to start at the highest risk areas and expand across the project into lower risk areas.
2. Maintenance of the existing and proposed community protection lines are a priority allowing the return of fire to the landscape in a safe and controllable way. Any fire that burns now, will not burn in a natural way. Dead standing and ground fuel loads are far beyond the level that can be managed safely.
3. Prioritize shaded fuel breaks and treatments in locations that would increase snowpack longevity and increase water quantity. The shaded fuel break on Natapoc should continue to the most southern extent of the project area following the full length of the USFS boundary.
4. Burning ground fuels is advantageous to overall forest health. Local air quality monitoring and management will need to be considerate of human health to maintain public support of these positive efforts.
5. Is the USFS willing to consider partnering with and allowing neighboring land owners to treat USFS forests in our area to reduce the risk of wildfire spreading to or from USFS land?

As the single largest landowner and manager of forest land, the USFS must find a path to successfully implement the UWPP. You too are a member of this community and as you are know, a failure to successfully manage our lands via this project could set the stage for a catastrophic wildfire destroying our community while leaving the environment and habitat in a devastated condition that will not see recovery for hundreds of years

Yours sincerely,