Response to the Midnight Project

Years ago, in 1971, we made a very intentional decision for our children, so they would be connected to nature. Growing up in S. California, it was easy to see that we were beginning to lift up technology and did not want our little ones to follow that path. We moved to Washington and settled in the Methow Valley to start a community of like-minded people where technology took a back seat to nature. We did not have television but we did have the forest. Our land was bordered by the forest and that is where our kids played. They learned to love and care for the land through their daily play. They learned that the forest provided them with clean air and water, habitat for wildlife, and great places to camp and swim.

We are now putting our land in trust to our grandchildren, with the hope that their children will also cherish nature and live on and protect their land. We are distressed by the Midnight Project because the measurement of what is a big tree has been changed so that larger trees can be logged. Any tree 20 inches and over should be saved but on the Midnight Project, loggers can cut down trees 16- 24.9 inches. The definition of a large tree should be consistent with the OWNF Restoration Strategy which defines larger trees as over 20 inches in diameter very large trees as over 25 inches. Leave every tree that measures 20 inches or more!

I went to see what has been happening in surrounding forest where trees have been logged and saw piles made and not removed after the log sales. This is fuel for fires, not the living trees. I say no to selling the big trees, 20 inches or larger, and yes to cleaning up all the piles and messes left after thinning. This needs to be done by hand and no big equipment brought in for removal as they damage the fragile soil in the post fire landscape.

The poor forest management of the past cannot be rectified by more poor management. Clean up the forest, burn all piles after thinning only small trees, so that piles are not fodder for forest fires. The forest belongs to our grandchildren, who are our hope for the future, as their love for nature will create our next conservation leaders and caretakers. Remember the primary goal of this project is resilience not revenue.

Karen Shaffer 253 229 1868

70 2nd Mile Rd

Twisp, Wa. 98856