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July 7, 2023

Lolo National Forest Supervisor's Office
c/o Amanda Milburn, Plan Revision
24 Fort Missoula Rd.
Missoula, MT 59804

Dear Plan Revision Team,

Pyramid Mountain Lumber, Inc. submits the following comments on the Lolo Forest Plan Revision Draft Assessment.

Pyramid Mountain Lumber (PML) is the oldest family owned and operated sawmill in Montana. The mill has operated in Seeley Lake, Montana continuously for the last 73 years. As "The Stewardship Company," PML supports this draft assessment because it recognizes the abysmal condition of most forest habitat types across the Lolo National Forest, and cites restorative active management as an essential tool in recovering forest health.

We appreciate the recognition of timber harvests as multifaceted tools for completing a broad range of resource objectives associated with improving forest health and ecological integrity. Alongside the improvement of our ecosystems are the benefits to our rural communities – supplying jobs and services to sustain the well-being of countless families across the forest. Forest resources from the Lolo National Forest are integral to our survival, and acknowledgement of active management as a tool to improve the broad range of forest habitat types across the Lolo is clearly defined throughout the draft assessment.

Timber sales on the Lolo provide PML the opportunity to show our commitment to sustainability and stewardship, and we appreciate the admission of that in the draft assessment. We encourage the revision team to focus on purposeful language that can help control the role of the courts when timber sales are finalized. We are cognizant of the substantial work associated with timber sale development and the inevitable frustration that ensues when these sales get tied up in court. Referring to the Forest Plan as a pillar in court cases could work to control the litigation that has been stonewalling sales for too long. Our forests are turning red and burning in catastrophic wildfires while litigants draw a profit from fighting painstakingly outlined and researched timber sales, so many of which include stewardship work beyond the harvest of sawtimber itself. The new forest plan has the capacity to command the court's decisions on future sales.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this draft assessment. The positive response from the revision team to Industry's involvement in the forest plan revision thus far has not gone unnoticed. PML is thankful to the revision team for integrating active management into the forefront of conversation in this extensive process.

Please contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zoë Leake", with a stylized, cursive script.

Zoë Olivia Leake

Resource Forester

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