Dear USDA Forest Service: March 30, 2014

 As a concerned member of the community and an advocate for environmental sustainability, I am writing again to express my reservations regarding Sandwich Vegetation Management Project. While I fully support the pursuit of environmental conservation and the advancement of sustainable practices, I am compelled to question the scientific underpinnings and projected outcomes of this particular initiative.

I have written of my concerns on two other occasions and have attended three meetings to do the same

Upon a thorough review of the research and findings that have been presented in support of the project especially the Soils Report, several concerns have emerged regarding the methodology employed and the interpretation of data. It appears that certain assumptions made may not fully account for the complexity of environmental systems or the variability inherent in natural processes. Specifically, the data on clcium depletion though reasonably thorough does not mean lack of impact.

Moreover, the potential unintended consequences of implementing the initiative without a more robust understanding of these complexities could, paradoxically, result in negative environmental impacts. For instance, old growth forests have been shown to have numerous benefits to climate and soil and water. Our present government supports protecting old growth forests and not only virgin forests.

Given these concerns, I strongly advocate for a reconsideration of the current approach. It is imperative that any action taken in the name of environmental conservation is grounded in sound, comprehensive scientific research. To this end, I propose the following: hold up this project until more complete impact on soil and water are considered and the voices of the community are more thoroughly included.

I am confident that by adopting a more cautious and rigorous approach, we can ensure that our efforts to protect and preserve the environment are both effective and sustainable. I am eager to contribute to a constructive dialogue on this matter and am available for further discussion at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Helen Steele

Chemistry and soil science