



March 19, 2026

Objection Reviewing Officer
Region 6 Regional Forester
Pacific Northwest Region, USDA Forest Service,
Attn: 1570/1950 Objections, 1220 SW 3rd Ave, Portland, OR 97204

Objection submitted project website:
<https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?Project=68852>

RE: Forestwide Thinning Treatments Project Draft Decision and Final Environmental Assessment (EA)

Pursuant to 36 C.F.R. Part 218.7, Hampton Lumber files this objection to the proposed draft decision for the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie (MBS) Forestwide Thinning Treatments Project Final EA. The content of this objection is based upon the prior specific written comments submitted by Hampton Lumber on January 9, 2025, in response to the Draft EA, which are hereby incorporated by reference.

I. OBJECTOR INFORMATION

Objector
Hampton Lumber
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Portland, OR 97225

Objector's Designated Representative:
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II. STATEMENT OF INTEREST

Hampton Lumber is a fourth-generation, family-owned company deeply rooted in the rural communities of Washington and Oregon. Our interest in the sustainable management of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest (MBS) stems from our operational dependence on the Forest's timber resources and our commitment to the well-being of the communities we support

with our milling infrastructure. Consistent, predictable, and sustained yield from active forest management is vital to the long-term health of the National Forests and the economic stability of the rural communities we call home.

As a long-standing partner in collaboration and a primary stakeholder in the health and productivity of the MBS, Hampton Lumber supports the project's goal of increasing forest resiliency and efforts to improve planning efficiency. However, the current emphasis on broad-scale procedural streamlining has resulted in a framework that is not fully aligned with the prescribed land-allocation objectives and timber production requirements of the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) and the National Forest Management Act (NFMA). This approach creates a disconnect that prevents the project from successfully achieving its stated economic and forest management objectives.

III. OBJECTION ISSUES

1. Failure to Achieve the Stated Purpose and Need: Inadequate Assurance of Sustained Timber Yield

Hampton commends the MBS for incorporating the sustainable flow of forest products as a primary project need. However, the Proposed Action's 1,200-acre annual treatment cap is mathematically inconsistent with this goal. Over a 30-year lifespan, this project would only treat a maximum of 36,000 acres; This restriction limits management to only 2% of the Forest over three decades, providing no assurance of the of the predictable, consistent volume required by the regional economy, sustained timber yield required by the Project's own Purpose and Need, and the mandates of Executive Order 14225.

Requested Relief: The Forest Service must revise the EA and Decision Notice to increase the annual treatment ceiling to a level that meaningfully addresses the 140,000 acres currently available for harvest on the MBS. We request the Agency analyze an alternative that authorizes treatment on 3,000–5,000 acres per year to ensure a consistent and predictable timber volume.

2. De Facto Reallocation of Matrix Lands: Violation of NWFP Standards & Guidelines

The EA proposes a uniform thinning prescription (35% relative density) across both LSR and Matrix lands, effectively managing the Forest's limited Matrix acreage as "Reserve" land. This approach violates the NWFP and NFMA by ignoring the specific Standards and Guidelines for Matrix lands, which mandate a steady supply of timber. Furthermore, the Agency's failure to analyze a range of alternatives—including regeneration harvest—precludes a "hard look" at the economic potential of these lands and contradicts the management goals of Executive Order 14225.

Only 3% (56,000 acres) of the MBS is Matrix. Matrix objectives under the NWFP are centered on balancing timber production with ecological connectivity and biodiversity. On the MBS, this balanced approach is difficult to meet where the land base available for commercial timber harvest is significantly constrained. Given the MBS's severely constrained operational footprint,

prioritizing late-successional conditions on these few productive acres jeopardizes the long-term supply of wood products essential for local industry and rural economies.

Requested Relief: The Forest Service should uncouple the 56,000 acres of Matrix lands from this forest-wide thinning proposal. The Decision Notice should explicitly defer management of Matrix stands to a subsequent site-specific NEPA analysis that can adequately address regeneration harvest and the economic requirements of even-aged management, rather than defaulting to a one-size-fits-all prescription across land allocations.

We appreciate your consideration of these points and look forward to a resolution that supports both forest resiliency and a predictable timber supply for our rural communities. We request an opportunity to participate in the upcoming objection resolution meetings.

Respectfully,

Anjolene Ngari
Collaborative Forestry Manager
Hampton Lumber