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Comments: To whom it may concern:

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Forestry supports the Wayne National Forest's (WNF) Draft Assessment and supplemental reports as part of their forest plan revision. The ODNR Division of Forestry is currently working with stakeholders to update Ohio's statewide Forest Action Plan. In this process, as well as other efforts, the Wayne National Forest has been a key partner. The WNF has collected critical scientific data, derived from internal monitoring as well as external literature and stakeholder contribution relating to their 15 main topic areas. This information is the foundation of plan development and implementation and monitoring going forward. Much of the same data is informing the Ohio Forest Action Plan, and it is likely that similar opportunities, strategies, and objectives will be identified at the statewide scale as will be identified in the WNF's focus area of southeastern Ohio. Key issues including shifts in species composition (lack of oak regeneration), sustainable forest management to support local economies, conservation of biological diversity, and threats to forest health such as climate change and invasive species are critical issues that are shared between the WNF and Ohio Forest Action Plan assessments. We look forward to continuing to work with the WNF and other partners on these issues in the future. The ODNR Division of Forestry supports the WNF's assessment documents.

Sincerely,

Daniel Balser

Chief and State Forester

ODNR Division of Forestry