

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/18/2024 5:00:00 AM

First name: Joe

Last name: Puentes

Organization: Sierra Pacific Industries

Title: Division Forester

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Forest Service's proposed amendment to 128 national forest Land Management Plans to protect old growth. The Forest Service should reconsider rushing through the process of amending 128 Land Management Plans through a single Environmental Impact Statement and applying a "one size fits all" approach. Major forest policy decisions should be made at the Regional or Forest level. Please recognize that each Forest has its own challenges and ecologically unique stand conditions requiring a locally specific approach. The Forest Service should take advantage of this opportunity to increase the pace and scale of science based active management to improve forest health and resiliency to wildfire, insects, and disease. These threats are responsible for the loss of millions of acres of mature and old growth on our national forests. I have firsthand experiences observing the aftermath of wildfire on old growth stands on the Shasta Trinity, Klamath, and Lassen National Forests and its obvious lack of management is at least partially to blame. As Land Management Plans are revised, please reduce the restrictions on mechanical thinning within these stands to give land managers the tools they need to meet their desired stand conditions. Diameter limits and Late Seral Reserves (LSR) restrictions severely handicap the Forest Service's ability to treat and protect old growth stands. In conclusion, the future of old growth timber stands depends on active forest management and any amendments need to provide landscape level forest health and wildfire resiliency. Sincerely, Joe Puentes
Sierra Pacific Industries
Shasta Lake Division
ATTACHMENT: Old Growth_Shasta lake - Comments copied to text box and coded/completed.