

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/11/2020 1:10:11 AM

First name: M.

Last name: P.

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on management of our public lands, forests, microbial soils, streams and rivers, spring heads, fresh air and clean water, along with the rich bio-diverse wildlife, amphibians, birds, insects, and pollinators that you serve. Thank you also for your commitment to preserving them which falls heavily on you as well as all public "owners" - at great sacrifice by those before us who cared for them, fought for them and sacrificed for their preservation for future generations.

The following comments are founded in extensive agricultural family history which practiced organic farming before it had the name. Our ecosystem, woven by complex mycorrhizae, surpasses our current understanding at this point in our evolution. Therefore, many of us, evidenced here, hold it dearer than anything of material value in our modern world.

As a keystone forest, trees, and native plant society supporter, it is vital that we begin the cultural shift required to protect and preserve these essential first steps in the trophic ladder of the food web. With them follows the insects which are the protein link to everything else on up, including ourselves. I do not believe, based on my extensive reading, we will successfully predict with any precision, the forest health given the current circumstances of our human expansion, cultural advancement (or lack of), and climate change. As example, this January 11th will be 70° with tornado watches. Our sea levels rise yearly. Winds increase with intensity with fewer trees as buffers. That alone underscores the need for better management of our remaining greenspaces as well as recognizing our ineptitude in mitigating the immense negative impact we have wrought on biodiversity.

I support:

I support the management of the forests with controlled fires. There are excellent fire ecologists- Shan Cammack comes to mind, who can assist in determining how to conduct controlled fires with desired results and not putting the wildlife and species at risk.

I support management of the forests to mitigate invasive species and pests, including responsible removal of the Hemlocks and other affected organisms.

I do not support:

1) Timeline for public comment. While I appreciate the effort made, I only just learned of this project, released to the public on 12-2-19, one of the most complex months of the year for having available personal time. This is not enough time for Georgia public forest landowners, who on-average work a 10 hour day, to peruse the 30+ documents, 1,000's of pages, letters and terminology which most are not fully able to absorb, research, have dialogue, collect feedback, and respond with informed intelligence by this date tonight.

2) I'm adamantly opposed to such widespread application of chemicals. I could not find, certainly no specific references to in many of the respected organizations that have contributed comments, on how this will be applied, enforced, monitored, tested, etc. The Gulf of Mexico has one of the worlds' largest dead zones in the world plaguing our coastlines with red tide and bacterial outbreaks that destroy life itself. Many scientists have reported on this which is largely attributed to glyphosate and other industrial and agricultural chemicals washing their way down the Mississippi Watershed. Combined with the threat of salination of our aquifers increasingly threatened by the encroaching Atlantic Ocean, puts water at top of mind for both ecological conservation and human survival.

3) Any attempt to exclude the public from public comment on the progress, effects, results and reassessment process, which must occur, particularly with 20 years waiting period, is simply not acceptable. A project of this

size should be reduced to staged goals with perpetual stops to assess, realign, collect specialist, community and public comment, then resume. It is not possible to assess a solution in the current climate and with this many acres/hectare.

I have begun reading the organization letters and view submitted along with a few more substantially worded submittals. From my limited reading it is clear to me that those in the "Know" are supportive by degree only. That the bulk of those who represent the general public landowners require more time, have many questions, are opposed to suppressing public comment in any way, and desire more careful, slow steps by the Forest Service and those they elect to align with, to ensure more optimum outcomes.

I ask that you:

1) Please continue to invite public comment. Source public comment dissemination through the environmental channels that are clearly available to you. We stand better together united in understanding, respect and shared purpose.

2) Please do not introduce new roads. Please minimize retention of paved roads. Logging roads "turned recreational road" access destroy habitat, spread invasive plant seeds and spores, intensify species collapse, increase stormwater and pollutants, introduce noise, light, air, and human traffic pollution. Perhaps those that cannot reach the forest by foot can be reached with funding enabling viewing of these pristine spaces through the camera's lens?

3) Please do not harvest the forests trees. Let them return to the soil and feed the network. The redwood in California are awash with this beauty that feeds life into the forest. They are essential to our salamanders, our mosses and ferns, our amphibians that depend on these wooded "coral reefs".

4) Please use herbicides and pesticides sparingly, with no aerial spraying, far from any open water sources or spring heads according to the Army Corps of Engineers, and with 100% restrictive enforcement. Chemicals and poisons should be our last resort options until we find better ways. Glyphosate does to the soil, what it does to the human digestive system. It kills the good bacteria rendering it defenseless, requiring artificial fertilizers that make the soil chemical dependent to the fertilizer, fungicide and pesticide manufacturers- by design.

A great many thanks for the hard work and commitment required of this task ahead.