

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/8/2016 6:18:18 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Full disclosure: As a retired USDA Forest Service employee, I am familiar with the Forest Planning Process. I participated in Forest Plan public meetings and wrote a small part of the Mt. Hood National Forest Plan in the late 1980s, and calculated the yield tables from which forest productivity could be estimated for each of the alternatives. This plan has been superseded by at least one revision, and the current plan is but a shadow of the one I worked on.

I was the first Certified Silviculturist on the Mt. Hood National Forest, starting in 1976 and I was active until 1992 when I was transferred to the Alaska Region. I prepared silvicultural prescriptions for the harvest and management of one of the most productive managed forests in the entire nation. I was instrumental in eliminating a large reforestation backlog. My department brought in nearly enough income through the seasonal sale of noble fir foliage to pay for all the salaries under my supervision. I supervised the construction of a 75 acre seed orchard to produce genetically improved Douglas-fir and noble fir seedlings for reforestation. This seed orchard has been decommissioned and essentially dismantled, which I consider to be ill-advised and very wasteful.

My comments were stimulated in a public meeting organized by Stevens County Commissioners. I learned about the meeting through the Stevens County Citizen's Action Team (SCCAT), a volunteer group that provides a neighborhood patrol and security at local athletic events, as well as charitable activities. My initial comments will be brief, and I may or may not comment more extensively during the plan revision.

I live in Suncrest, an unincorporated community with a population that is comparable to the city of Colville. We no longer have a local newspaper, so we are dependent on other means of communication. I did NOT hear of the Colville National Forest Plan Revision through any Forest Service communication. If it hadn't been for our County Commissioners, I would not even know that you are revising the plan. I recommend that you advertise your activities more aggressively, so you will get a better cross-section of public comment.

Based on my experience on the Mt. Hood Forest Plan, I would expect the Colville National Forest Plan public meetings to come to where the people are, and to make sure meetings are properly advertised and promoted. Suncrest does not deserve to be left out of this process.

The County Commissioners laid out a series of GIS produced maps which were supposed to describe each alternative and enable comparison with the others. I found it impossible to compare alternatives because the legends used different symbols for the same proposed land use. Wilderness designation, for example, had a sort of grid for one alternative and different solid colors for others. I recommend that you DO NOT present these maps at any other public meetings until you fix this. As I'm also familiar with GIS technology, I know this is not difficult to fix.

I think you will have a more successful outcome if you present the alternatives as I've suggested.

That's all for now. I may or may not give additional input later.

Sincerely,

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