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First name: Chris Last name: Hewitt Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am in FULL support of this project proposal. As an avid user of this area, I have seen the changes of the landscape and overall healthy of the forest due to the lack of forest management. There are literally hundreds of species that benefit from ESH, and very few that benefit from a strictly mature forest. The state of Indiana just listed the ruffed grouse as an endangered species and cited lack of habitat as the cause. Do not let VA/WV become the next states to become extinct of grouse. The ruffed grouse is a sure sign of a healthy forest because they rely heavily on diverse forests. The current forest plan is NOT being followed, and we are very far behind. We need to manage every bit of forest we can to get it back to a healthy state. Currently we are adding less than 800 acres annually (average over the past decade) in ESH. As a result the forest is so far off the signed forest plan that its becoming harder and harder to catch up. Implementing this project will get us closer to the Forest Plan that was agreed to be everyone.