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Comments: Continuation of comments on January 7, 2020

Comment #7: Comprehensive approach to evaluate ecology, plan plant health continuity for timbering process  
I have observed for the last 20+ years the aftereffects of a close-by timber cut of a watershed.

The trees to be saved had been marked at a density of five per acre. Subsequent to the harvest only quick growing tree species of poplar, locust, white pine and some maple covered the slopes, with little undergrowth. Three years ago fire destroyed nearly all this new growth. Presently the landscape is denuded of most trees, and briars and poke weed prevail.

It would appear that there should be a better way to approach timbering, in order to re-create a much more diversified and fire resilient forest.

Therefore I propose that the Forest Service undertake timber harvest in the following way:

- a. Make an ecological assessment of the acreage to be timbered, including of adjacent zones. This should include matters of water/silt drainage, plant and tree cover and all diverse life of flora and fauna.
- b. Map out areas to be saved from timbering, based on this assessment. It is envisioned that this could comprise 10 to 25% of the total, and possibly patches from 1/2 to 3 acres, and arranged in nodes.
- c. The timber contractor is to post a performance bond and to sign on to this plan and to correct practices, including to a checklist. This minimizes the need for forest managers to monitor adherence to plans. The monetary aspect of compliance provides incentive to do things correctly.
- d. Subsequent restoration planting is to be managed by the Forest Service, at least in part, with the proceeds from the timber sale. Nodes might become connected in this way to let the forest heal itself during re-establishment.

Comment #8: Re-planting based on a comprehensive and diversified approach

- a. Plantings, as outlined under #7 above, should re-establish the tree and flora community as it previously existed
- b. Slow and fast growing tree seedling are to be planted, including those that serve to provide mast for animals.- not only oaks, but beech, hickory, chinquapin and such.
- c. Planting should include those species that are found relatively rarely, like persimmon, serviceberry, ash, cedar, if the environment is suitable.
- d. Plantings should include grasses, specific low growth shrubs like horse sugar, plantings like galax, and including rarer species, like orchids, even ginseng and ramp, where appropriate
- e. One might also consider remedial implanting of mycelium into ground and roots to re-establish holistic plant life

Comment #9: Establish sources for plants and tree seedlings

In order to support planting as per comment #8 above the Forest Service might contract with commercial growers to source such plants. This could include cooperative effort - even research - with Universities' agricultural and forestry departments, such as in Athens, GA and Clemson SC. For physical planting volunteer groups might well be eager to help.

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