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Comments: The following are my comments to some the sections of the draft assessment currently up for comment. These relate to current conditions that are new to this planning horizon:

1. Page 20, regarding uneven distribution of Forest age classes- While the Wayne itself does not contain a lot of early-successional forest habitat, the assessment and plan should recognize that, with its checkerboard ownership, significant clearcuts, old fields, and other early successional areas occur on private lands interspersed with the Wayne, and these lands provide such habitat. (This was recognized in the original Wayne plan, which resulted in de-emphasizing the need for early succession habitat in Wayne). A National Forest is unique in that it is one of the few areas that can utilize a long-term planning horizon. Most private forests are harvested every generation or so, well under 80 years. Only large public land areas can plan for large, closed canopy old growth because it can plan and manage on a 200+ year timetable. Southern Ohio has very little "Older Growth", but does have considerable "old fields". This should be recognized in the assessment.

2. Page 22, 32, et seq- Regarding Invasive plant species. It should be recognized that the problem of invasives is far greater now than in previous planning periods. When closed canopy areas (on public or private ownership) are now harvested, invasives readily colonize the newly-sunlit areas. Seed, etc is brought in by harvesting equipment, wind, and wildlife. Thus, where clear-cutting was often a sound harvesting practice 20+ years ago, clear cutting and similar practices that "open up the canopy" now cause considerable and possibly irreversible ecological injury due to colonizing invasives. The assessment should recognize this newer, increased threat. From an economic standpoint, the cost in labor and materials to control the resulting invasive problems may exceed the revenue received from the harvest. The plan should clarify that, when considering harvests during the planning horizon, the resulting influx of invasives will need to be considered, and the management plan will need to provide for such costs and benefits (ecologically and economically).

3. Recreation uses: The assessment needs to recognize the conflict between ATV use and other users of the Forest areas. "Planning for additional demand" for ATV uses will negatively impact several other users that are impacted by noise and high velocity vehicles in the Forest. The assessment needs to recognize the impacts of increased usership to other users and ecological resources, and that conflicts will need to be considered in the Forest plan decision making process.