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Organization:

Title:

Comments:

I am writing with deep concern about the proposed timber management project in the North Fork of the Nooksack River project. For many years I have hiked, camped and wandered in this area as have many other local people and visitors from throughout the world. Although my time in this area is of course quite recent in comparison with the indigenous people and the wildlife, it is an important part of my family's life as we go to the mountains to seek nature in a particularly spectacular location. It is also extremely important in terms of carbon sequestration, a primary factor in controlling climate change.

The Nooksack River is a vital part of the ecosystem and as such needs to be treated with the utmost care. It seems that recently there is more of an emphasis on production rather than conservation - the latter is much more important in the long term. We need intact forests to address our current dilemma of climate change including the long-term maintenance of water quality, sequestering of carbon and maintenance of stream flows. Intact forests serve an extremely important function.

I am particularly concerned about the plan for the "Stand regeneration, in Matrix: up to 1881 acres (575 in Riparian Reserve)" This sounds like a clear cut and will severely impact the Wells Creek, Canyon Creek & Glacier Creek areas, all of which are important access points for outdoor recreation for many people. I notice that it is Forest Policy to shield from public eyes such cut areas if they are to be viewed from the waters of a Wild and Scenic River, perhaps we should think about all of the eyes of the hiking/snowshoeing/skiing public that will undoubtedly be disturbed by this potential view. However, my main concern is for the wildlife, including the trees, who will be devastated by this action and urge the Forest Service to consider less invasive action. There are many clear cuts on private forest land in this area and management of public land does not have to include clear cutting.

While I realize the importance of logging to the local economy, that importance must be balanced with the needs of other sources of economic and environmental support. Our forests are to serve all of us, human and otherwise, and should not ever be used to bring additional wealth to the wealthiest among us. (I am not referring to the loggers, but to those at the top who will benefit the most from these clear cuts.) Let's allow the forests to mature and serve all of us with clean water, wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration and sensitive recreation. Addressing the needs of the planet's climate should be at the top of the list.

I urge and request a complete Environmental Impact Study that addresses wildlife, forest life, aquatic conditions, and the impact on the local Tribes such as the Nooksack and Lummi Tribes.