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Organization:

Title:

Comments: North Fork Nooksack Vegetation Management Project

Dear Decision Makers,

The MBSNF's North Fork Nooksack Vegetation Management Plan is a radical departure from the past few decades of FS management in the forest and the MBRD. The time has long come and gone for this type of clear-cutting of our National Forests. As far as "unhealthy" monoculture forest go, I have never seen a replanted-second growth forest that hasn't developed it's own successional qualities. Left alone, the forests will work things out on their own. Cutting it is not the best course of action, especially in historically unstable areas like the Canyon Creek drainage, an area who's logging and resultant tragic soil instability issues I am aware of and have worked there on stream restoration projects whose purpose was to mitigate those effects. Logging these forests will set a dangerous precedent in our region, possibly opening the floodgates to more of this activity in the MBSNF.

I find it difficult to believe that any commercial thinning of forests stands could benefit wildlife. Is there a sound scientific study that supports this plan? Once again, leaving the forest to its own development and succession over the ages is the best course of action considering water quality, wildlife conservation, soil stability and health. We are not going to improve on nature by further meddling.

The Forest Service's policy of Best and Highest Use is not being implemented in the forming of this management plan. The MBS and in particular the MBRD receives heavy visitation from nearby urban communities of Bellingham, Seattle and the Puget Sound area in general. Our forests satisfy a human need for replenishment, inspiration and rest from the demands from busy lifestyles. This type of recreational demand will only increase in the future. There are no substitutions for healthy, mature, naturally forested areas that have undisturbed esthetics and beautiful view corridors. I am very aware of the heavy visitation that the MBRD receives as a former FS employee, Bellingham resident, lifelong visitor of our National Forests in the North Cascades and avid hiker and climber. I know without question that the undisturbed beauty of our National Forests is of paramount importance to the visitors experience. The logging scars that are visible from high points and ridges detract from that experience and does not cast the Forest Service as an agency in good light.

There should be no further road building in our forest. Road building invites disrespectful visitation (dumping, shooting, vandalism) and contributes to soil instability and added silt to streams from runoff. If there is a concern at all for resource damage, don't build more roads or even temporary roads.

Another very important consideration is need for carbon sequestration with standing forests. To what degree this large scale removal of forests areas will effect climate change must absolutely be considered.

In consideration of many possible negative effects of this plan, and EIS must absolutely be completed prior to proceeding.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Randy Godfrey

