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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Re: North Fork Nooksack Vegetation Management Project #58218

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

I am a resident of Whatcom County. Based on my understanding of proposed Project #58218, allowing it to happen would result in significant adverse effects for our county's environment and tourism. Consequences for decisions like these do not contain themselves to only a local county or region, however. They extend to the rest of our planet. Mountain zones have a great role to play in moderating climate change. The future of our world depends on our forests. We log forests and generate economic activity, vital for our future. However, we also log forest and remove their potential to absorb carbon, also vital for our future. Such trade-offs should carefully consider our future for the only planet we live on.

I am also an avid outdoor recreationalist and have seen first-hand the negative impact of cleared-but-then-neglected lands. We permanently shape the forest's future negatively with extensive clearings like these, giving no chance to return. You only have to look south from Mount Baker to the South Fork of the Nooksack and Mount Josephine to see the result. I did in the last month. There are old, neglected logging roads zig-zagging across slopes, allowing invasive species to sprout up and fragmenting up living habitats. It also makes for unpleasant and even unnecessarily difficult foot travel, to say the least. Do we need a repeat of this on the other side of Mount Baker? I say no.

This proposal also appears to be a stripped-out version of NICE (Nooksack Integrated Conservation and Enhancement project). That proposal contained some positive conservation and recreation projects that timber revenue would have funded. What has your administration decided about this effort that changed since NICE was your direction? Without a good answer to this, please abandon your effort to irreparably damage our forests with all the negatives but none of the important positives. These decisions need careful consideration, both pros and cons, which NICE did. We can so easily adversely impact the forest for the next century in a matter of mere months when we abandon cautious deliberation. You should take time and care to review NICE and ask yourself what has changed, if anything. At the bare minimum, an Environmental Impact Statement is necessary, given the significant departure of this proposal from previous ones.

I object to North Fork Nooksack Vegetation Management Project #58218.

Karl L. Luce