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First name: Frank

Last name: Porfily

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hi, I am 77 years old and was born and raised up on a ranch in this area. I worked in the logging industry just out of high school and then graduated out of Oregon State College majoring in Mechanical Technology in agriculture.

I am very much in favor of deleting the 21 inch rule so the forest can be harvested ,instead of being burnt and creating smoke to breathe, to create jobs and lumber so we don't have to buy it from Canada and Russia and other countries.

Also I am a member of Crook County Collaboration and the Natural Resource Committee. Several years ago we were on a field trip up in the Ochocos and there was some timber sales no one would bid on. When asked why, several loggers spoke up and said if you would include those trees bigger than 21 inches we could economically make this work to bid on.

When I grew up here in Prineville we had 5 active sawmills and lots of people working in the industry. Those have all disappeared except one that is just making chips now.

If we changed the 21 inch rule this mill could start making lumber again and others may join again.

I recently took a drive up Sherwood Creek in the Maury Mountains. I almost cried when I seen the number of large trees that had matured, dried out and a lot of them had fallen and laying on the ground as fuel for fires when they could have been harvested.

Back in the years, the timber harvest created enough revenue to pay the cost of the forest service employees, half the cost of our school system and half the cost of the Crook County Road department.

I don't know as we could ever get back to that point, but please, let's make good use of our forest so we can limit the fires and put the wood to good use, and create jobs so people don't have to have their hand out to be fed, and harvest the big trees before they become snags and fall to become fuel for fires and smoke for us to breathe.

Thank you for this opportunity!