

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/27/2021 12:35:49 PM

First name: Robert

Last name: Doyle

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Mr. John Morgan, District Ranger

Cheat Potomac Ranger District

2499 North Fork Highway

Petersburg, WV 26847

Subject: Upper Cheat River Project

Dear Mr. Morgan:

Please allow me to make a few comments on the proposed management activities of the Upper Cheat River Project Area on Mon National Forest.

I am a native West Virginian who grew up in the heart of the Mon National Forest in NW Pocahontas Co. and I now live in Preston Co. I have enjoyed the beauty, wildlife and myriad of opportunities this wonderful forest has afforded us for many years. I wish to see this forest remain vibrant and healthy and continue to provide opportunities for my children and future generations of West Virginians.

As a forester, I know a healthy, vibrant and ecologically diverse forest is no accident. It requires periodic maintenance which includes timber harvests to achieve its best potential. Plans for the Upper Cheat Project Area include increased timber harvests which will undoubtedly help maintain a healthier forest while increasing wildlife and recreational opportunities.

I do notice the frequency and scale of these timber harvests falls significantly short of what is necessary to keep the Mon National Forest healthy and vigorous. A patchwork of small management units every few years will not come close to keeping up with the continual growth over such a large forest. Also mechanized yarding and helicopter logging are extremely expensive and sometimes even cost prohibitive methods of timber harvest. These activities are rarely warranted and tend to benefit out-of-state work crews allowing precious funds to be channeled away from local families and communities. As a forestry professional, I know we have experienced conventional loggers in this state who have proven time and again they can harvest in a responsible manner and comply with mandatory best management practices. Furthermore, the timber industry in this state stands ready purchase, harvest and process the materials providing countless job opportunities supporting families and communities statewide.

I believe increasing the scale and scope of timber sales in the Mon National Forest will have positive effects across our entire state and it should become a priority of the Forest Service to see these changes implemented. I do understand the constraints placed on the system to prepare and carry out timber harvests and I commend the Forest Service for continuing to implement these vitally necessary harvests for the benefit of the forest. I wish to simply say I support increased timber harvest on the Mon National Forest for the long-term health, well-being and usefulness of this wonderful local asset.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Respectfully,