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Comments: I have reviewed the provided materials in some detail. I appreciate and applaud the Service's proposing a project that seeks to implement many needed projects.

My company is the world's largest stave and spirit barrel producer and part of our mission is to ensure that our local communities and the forests they rely upon thrive. Therefore, our primary interest and focus is on sustaining oak forest communities (particularly those with a component of white and chinkapin oaks).

With that in mind, I would like to know what criteria the project will use during implementation to ensure that those communities thrive following regeneration harvests? For example, will populations of advanced reproduction be sampled or estimates of stump sprouting be generated prior to the implementation of the regeneration harvest? If so, what criteria will be used to determine adequacy?

Non-native invasive plants (NIPPS) are quite a challenge if not controlled prior to any type of canopy disturbance or ground disturbance, especially if kudzu is nearby. The project documents indicate that treatment prior to implementation of canopy disturbance and road maintenance activities. How many pre-treatments are expected and how many years post-treatment will the populations of NNIPS be controlled? The scoping letter describes the treatment as eradication of the populations. Does the Service feel that is realistic as a goal in locations with well-established populations of NNIPS? Other project documents use the term 'control'.

In closing, I will reiterate how good it is to see the Service proposing a project that has the potential to positively impact our forests well into the future and leave them in a better condition for those who follow. Please feel free to contact me with any questions if what I have provided is unclear.