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First name: Theresa

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: SUMMARY OF WHAT I *SUPPORT*

1. Reasonable selective logging
2. Stump application of herbicides on individual stumps and for invasive species removal ONLY
3. Use of local (Whitley and McCreary County) labor to do the work

SUMMARY OF WHAT I AM *AGAINST*

1. Clear cutting 5,347 acres using the 3 harvest methods detailed in the plan:
 - a. Clear cut on 1,016 acres
 - b. 2 aged shelterwood on 1,869 acres which is also called "clear cut with reserves" where ~10 to 20 trees of ~14" diameter are left as reserves
 - c. Deferment harvest on 2,462 acres which is also called "clear cut with reserves" where ~20 to 40 trees of ~14" diameter are left as reserves, which are then cut 10 to 15 years later
2. Use of herbicides in any manner not mentioned in #2 above
3. Cutting down the 270 acres around the 143 to 252 year old trees living above Mulberry Hollow and Embury Moses Road.

DETAILS

I am not anti logging. I am not against the US Forest Service (USFS) or the government. I realize the USFS has a challenging job to balance the uses of these publicly owned national forests of which the USFS is the steward. The USFS has been collaborative and helpful and I am not against you.

That said, this plan is excessive and unbalanced. This plan is far too focused on lumber extraction. Of the ~20,000 total acres in this area of the Stearns District of the Daniel Boone National Forest, 10,000 acres (1/2) will be impacted by some form of treatment. Of those 10,000 acres, this plan proposes that 5,347 acres be clear cut using 3 different harvest methods: clear cut, 2 aged shelterwood and deferment harvest.

I am against the ~5,000 acres of clear cutting in all 3 forms that this plan shows. I am against this due to the environmental damage this causes. For many years after the trees are removed, the environment will be degraded significantly, prone to erosion, flooding, landslides, invasive species and harm to endangered species. These slopes are steep and the terrain mountainous. We can expect flooding to only get more severe as time goes on. The burden of these negative impacts of this many acres of clear cutting is left to the local communities and local governments. This is a problem as old as time. Valuable resources are extracted by government and big industries and the surrounding community is left to deal with all the problems for years and years afterwards.

I want to know if in creating this plan, the USFS took into account a full ecosystem management approach, which would have included the 50,000 acres of land surrounding this 20,000 acres of the Stearns Ranger District of the Daniel Boone National forest. The plan documents say this Jellico Mountain area "is transitioning to mature forest." The bar charts on page 3 and 4 of the plan letter says that the primary reason for this plan is to create a "more young, even-aged forest." If this plan took into account the private land SURROUNDING the national forest, it would show that most of the surrounding private land has been logged and is already "young forests." Much of the private land is also already pasture. Just drive down Jellico Creek Road to see vast fields of open fields already there. I understand that this area of the Stearns District is all the USFS controls, so this plan is trying to manage the public lands to achieve this diversity of age classes. However, if the USFS is truly managing this land "for the people" and with all our interests in mind and is not managing primarily for timber production, the USFS would instead leave far more of the national forest to become old growth over time to counteract the

young growth being produced repeatedly on privately owned land that surrounds the national forest.

This may seem hypocritical for me to recommend the USFS preserve the public lands for future generations as mature forests while we as private land owners log ours. It is not hypocritical and here is why. First, most of us do not clear cut our privately owned forests. We selectively cut it, as several loggers explained in the Town Meeting on 11/17. We love our land and we do not want it destroyed by clear cutting. Second, we are in general, not a wealthy community. Many of us are land rich and sometimes, cash poor. When a farmer logs his or her own land, he/she does it carefully and benefits financially. When the USFS clear cuts the national forest, the community does not directly benefit financially, and we are left far worse off. So, I am asking the USFS to preserve the land for which you are the stewards and only you can preserve. That is the role of government, to raise up to a higher level and truly do what is right for the "greatest good" for all the people.

I am against spraying herbicides in the national forest. I have 11 colonies of honey bees on our farm on Little Wolf Creek Road. I work hard at keeping my bees healthy and productive. I practice more natural beekeeping, so my colonies are spaced very far apart from each other and located all over the mountain. Some of my colonies are very close to the boundary with the national forest. Like all of nature, bees have no concept of property lines. Bees forage up to 2 miles from their homes in any direction, traveling to look for food across a total of 1,280 acres. This means my bees and all wild pollinators will almost for sure be exposed at some level to herbicides sprayed in the national forest. In this plan, under the "Intermediate Vegetation Treatments" section, it shows that every single one of the 5 treatments includes being "treated with herbicides." At the Town Meeting on 11/17, one of the Forest Service folks mentioned something to the effect that "the road crews spray a lot of herbicides." While this may be true, this is no justification for the USFS spraying herbicides as well. In fact, knowing this, the USFS should not spray yet more herbicides and instead, since the USFS knows there is already a heavy load of spraying, the USFS should not add to this already high herbicide load in our environment.

I am against cutting down the ~200 year-old trees above Emby Moses Rd. and Mulberry Hollow along Little Wolf Creek Rd. Our neighbors know these trees and played up there as kids. They want these trees there for their kids and their grandchildren. A University of Indiana professor identified 8 trees that are between 143 and 252 years there. In the earlier IRMS phase of this project, Kentucky Heartwood submitted a written request to the USFS asking that 270 acres of national forest surrounding these trees be added to the land already set aside as old growth forest. Instead, the USFS plan shows these trees in an area to be harvested using 2 aged shelterwood (also called "clear cut with reserved"). In addition, right next to these trees, the plan shows a straight up clear cut. I understand that 8 or so old trees does not make for an old growth forest. Yet, if the USFS keeps cutting down the remaining old trees, how will the surrounding forest ever be able to become old growth? I understand there is already some old growth forests designated in the plan as old growth along the Kentucky/Tennessee border. I would like to see these 270 acres connected by a wide wildlife corridor to the existing old growth area and ALL of this preserved for future generations. In other words, as I indicated earlier, I want to see more old growth and more preservation of these national forests to balance out the timber production.

I am against 40 years of this work occurring. I understand the USFS sees this plan as acceptable because it spans such a long time. In my mind, for 40 years, the incredible peace and quiet of our mountains will be ruined. There are few places on the planet left where there is the kind of quiet that exists today in the many hollers this plan will affect. So, to think of 40 years listening to chain saws and skidders echoing across the mountain will be nothing short of terrible. So does 40 years of logging trucks driving up and down Jellico Creek Road to get to the forest access roads.

I would like to see the use of Whitley County and McCreary County loggers and workers employed to do this work. I honestly do not trust outsiders to come in and do the best job because they don't have to live with the consequences. I trust my neighbors to do this work well because whatever comes off that mountain goes right into all our streams and down into our hollers. If logging trucks will be coming up and down our roads for 40

years, I want to wave at my neighbors as they drive by in those logging trucks and know that even if it's noisy and it's not great, at least my neighbors are benefiting. Our neighbors are loggers, and they can do this work well, profit from their hard work and go right home to their families. They can then spend the money they earned right here at our own stores. If this is going to happen and our community must deal with the downsides, my neighbors should benefit from it.

Finally, I will end by asking the USFS to please incorporate my ideas and the ideas our community is sharing to moderate this plan. Move this plan away from clear cutting and move to reasonable amounts of selective cutting. Do not add more herbicides to the environment. Enable more mature forests and old growth areas that are left alone for future generations. Use local companies to do the work.

Thank you very much for your time and continued collaboration.

Sincerely,
Theresa Martin - Concerned Citizen