Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/29/2022 10:37:28 PM
First name: Janice
Last name: Musick
Organization:
Title:
Comments: Jellico Vegetation Management Project Comment Form
My name is Janice Musick. I own 265 acres of mountain property on Jellico Creek Road in Whitley County Kentucky. My parents bought this land in the early 1950s. They had it logged with horses using select cutting in which only the trees 14 inches in diameter or larger were cut. Thirty five years later it was logged again using horses and once again only cutting the largest timber. This did not severally damage the land and it allowed younger timber to grow and mature. It did not promote overgrowth of brush and other vegetation or disturb the natural balance of the ecosystem of the forest. There were no landslides or muddy run-off. Twenty years later it was logged again with equipment. This did a lot of damage and too many trees smaller than 14 inches were taken. This allowed for much overgrowth of brush and other vegetation. The damage the equipment did to the land caused several major landslides, one of which blocked Jellico Creek Road.
I feel your plan to manage Daniel Boone National Forest is way too excessive with huge tracts marked for clear cutting. From observing smaller tracts that were clear cut in the early 1980's, they still have overgrowth of vegetation, thick, tangled brush and no large trees. I'm not sure if the land ever recuperates, at least not in one persons' lifetime. There are far reaching consequences to your plan to clear cut such a large amount of acreage, much of which is on the mountain tops. It has been my experience that clear cutting allows for the overgrowth of invasive species and other vegetation that normally can't grow in the low light of a select-cut forest. It also leads to muddy run-off, landslides and compacted ground. It also disturbs the natural balance of the ecosystem in which many animals, birds, reptiles and certain plant species may not survive. Your solution to the invasive species is to use herbicides. There have not been enough studies done to guarantee that the herbicides won't end up in the creeks, in our drinking water, in the wind blowing over our crops and homes and in the wild meat we eat. Studies show that birth defects, cancer and lung damage can result from exposure to herbicides. What you are proposing would be a massive treatment plan over huge tracts of land increasing the risk of toxic exposure.
In your overzealous plan to "manage" the forest please consider there are other options. One would be leave it alone. Develop more camp grounds and hiking trails so more people can enjoy these beautiful forested mountains. We the people who live here love these breathe-taking mountains. I want to be able to look up and enjoy their beauty the rest of my life. I want my children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and onward to have beautiful mountains to look at play in, hike in, camp in and hunt in. Another option is to quit using clear cutting as a method of managing the forest. Besides the reasons mentioned above the clear-cutting would destroy the beauty of these mountains for centuries if not forever.