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Comments: To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Obiora Embry and I received my B.S. degree in industrial (or systems) engineer from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. As an avid camper, hiker, photographer, food grower, and observer of systems, including but not limited to ecosystems, I am often troubled by the lack of systems or holistic (aka quantum) thinking done today.

I say this because too many of the issues and problems that "have surfaced" (literally and figuratively) in the past 20-30 years result from our individual and collective lack of understanding of Nature, and what was put into place to keep a balanced ecosystem. For instance, when the logging occurs (I have seen first hand the negative effects of logging and strip mining on ancestral land), there is an immediate and long-term effect on the health of the soil beneath the forest floor that in turn also effects the remaining flora, if any, along with the fauna. (The same is true of tillage and monoculture row crops when it comes to agricultural land.)

"Essentially all life depends on the soil...There can be no life without soil and no soil without life; they have evolved together." - Charles Kellog

The proposal to clear cut ~5, 000 acres of forest land does not serve the people, nor benefit the land. If the goal is to decrease the biodiversity of the land, increase the number and species of invasive plants and insects, and to cause landslides and/or soil erosion, then you will succeed, if this plan is allowed to come to fruition.

Within the last 20-30 we have seen increases in the number and severity of floods (not just by those who live in a flood plain), water runoff, soil erosion, and the like...much of this is rooted in the lack of understanding that perennial flora with deep taproots (not turf grass and other forms of "green concrete") are what has historically kept ecosystems in balance. By removing wide swaths of trees the devastation that occurs will not only affect my generation but also future generations.

We have to one day, wake up, to realize that altering and changing large ecosystems not only effect areas downstream but all around, hence the need to do systems thinking to understand the full and not diluted impact of such actions.

Thank you for your time.