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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for accepting this comment regarding the Forest Service's proposed amendment to 128 national forest land management plans to protect old growth.

We feel that the Forest Service should reconsider the Old Growth Proposal of amending 128 Land Management plans developed through a single Environmental Impact Assessment in less than a year.

The Forest Service should take advantage of this opportunity to increase the pace and scale of active management to improve forest health and resiliency to wildfire, insects, and disease that are responsible for the loss of millions of acres of mature and old growth on our national forests. Major forest policy decisions should be accomplished through local engagement and public participation.

Our concern is that the proposal does not take into consideration the unique characteristics of forests throughout our nation. The species, geographical location and stand structure must be considered on a case-by-case basis and apply the proper silvicultural and land management practices that best fit those conditions. The National Forest within our immediate timber procurement area are geographically and ecologically unique and require different approaches based on local conditions. Regional forest health should not succumb to a top-down one that fits all directive.

Tahoe Forest Products, LLC is a new sawmill that is being built in Carson City, Nv. Our sawmill is located on the Washoe Indian Reservation who benefits financially, and employment opportunities are provided to tribe members. We will utilize approximately 30 to 40 million board feet of logs annually. We will manufacture Ponderosa Pine, Sugar Pine, Western White Pine, True Firs, Douglas fir and Incense Cedar. In preparation to start our sawmill we have procured 24 million board feet of logs, 85% of which came from the 200 acres plus Cal-dor fire in 2021 on the Eldorado National Forest. Since then, we have begun to procure volume from Forest Service sales on the Inyo National Forest and the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. Our timber procurement area will also include all or portions of the Humboldt-Toiyabe N.F, Tahoe N.F., Plumas N.F and Stanislaus N.F.

Tahoe Forest Products has been widely accepted and encouraged by communities in and around the Lake Tahoe Area. This is very much due to the catastrophic fires near the Tahoe basin and throughout California in recent years. Attitudes have changed greatly over the past few years and much of the public see the positive effects of sound forest management, sustainable through having a viable forest products Industry. Tahoe Forest Products will be an important contributor to sustaining forest health by providing an outlet for timber and biomass harvested from well managed forest.

The Old Growth Proposal could have a lasting impact on the future and success of our sawmilling operation. For example due to over regulation since the late 80's and 90's, Northern California has decreased the number of sawmills from 136 to about 35 . The result was the reduction in timber harvest contributing to the deterioration and overstocking of our forest. Our national forests are dynamic systems, not static.

The Forest Service should not lose our national forests trying to satisfy a political driven agenda and instead focus on overall sustainable forest management and forest health. Protecting old growth forests requires action. We urge the Forest Service to describe and recommend, in detail, what specific actions it must take to achieve the agency's stated goals. Tahoe Forest Products, LLC would ask that you reconsider the current proposal for amending 128 Land Management Plans through a single Environmental Impact Statement.

