

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/21/2024 3:23:52 AM

First name: wilkes

Last name: covey

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am opposed to this plan to thin/clearcut the timber on the West Wall of Pine Valley. I live in Carson about 6 miles north of Halfway and the intersection of the Carson Grade. Right above our house, Hancock Timber Management owned 965 acres of land and 450+ acres were clearcut 5 years ago and replanted with trees presently a foot or so tall. These were planted in a 3 foot spot sprayed areas and approximately 100,000 trees were planted. A cocktail of herbicides were used in the spot spraying. A number of citizens pushed back on this spraying effort and the clear cutting we were very concerned about contamination of our surface and ground water with this spraying. I was informed that the remaining timber has been sold and will be clear cut after the new trees in logged areas have grown 4 or 5 feet....this action was monitored by State Forestry out of Baker City.

The clearcuts are a huge eyesore, the remaining trees not logged have not fared well and up on the USFS 100 road the whole area is basically stripped. This area has far fewer trees that were left because it is hidden from the main road on Carson grade. Having walked this area often it is a travesty to see how it was left especially when one looks over to the boundary where the timber was not cut and trees are dense and in remarkably good shape. This clearcut process in my estimation is a disaster and I don't want anything like this to happen on the West Wall.

The major concern I have is that however the west wall is logged be it selective or clearcut in some areas, the whole area will not be restored and reforested because of slope, soil, water, desertification, and other conditions which negatively influence forest viability. I worry about the visual aftershock. I worry about how climate change will disable the area even if it is not logged. I am in favor of keeping all of the West Wall intact.

For wildfire mitigation, the FireWise Community is well developed and thriving with your agencies and private individuals doing what they need to 'harden' the immediate vicinity around private structures. This is what needs to be focused on...not logging the West Wall, not enlarging the fire brakes around old logging roads.

I have changed my view point on how selective cutting works in this case and am not in favor of this action...logging the trees 10 feet on either side of the majority of the access roads in the West Wall will do nothing to stop a fire from jumping the roads as was seen in the fire 5 years ago that ripped thru Eagle Creek and roared along the 77 road into the low hills and sag areas south of Halfway creating a scorched earth landscape.

I believe the trees are better left to sequester carbon in the ground. This is my hope for this area of Pine Valley which currently is really beautiful to look at every time I drive back home to Carson. The aesthetics and carbon sequester and oxygen output of these magnificent trees far outweigh the fire prevention option. Harvesting this 'resource' is my last option for the West Wall.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my thoughts on your proposal....wilkes covey