

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/17/2024 4:00:00 AM

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Comments: I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the updated USFS proposals for the management of the Jellico portion of the Daniel Boone National Forest.

First of all, I do not see any benefit to adopting the modified 40-year Proposed Action. The modifications are so scarce as to be laughable, and do not respond to the public's comments and concerns in the previous round of comments. I have also noticed that the Ruffed Grouse Society has commented extensively this time around. It is well known that they receive funding from the USFS. Moreover, their concerns about young forest habitat are unwarranted. Kentucky has plenty of young forest due to over-harvest of timber, particularly in the form of clear cuts.

Secondly, I do not see Alternative 2 as a workable solution. For one, we all know the USFS is not going to simply leave the forest alone when there is money to be made. For two, some management is in fact required to deal with invasive species, particularly the Tree of Heaven.

This leaves us with Alternative 1. The modified timeline makes considerably more sense, as does the reduction in both forms and acreage targeted for clear cut. The preservation of more older trees, as per the Biden administration's mandate, is also appreciated. However, the inclusion of any form of clear cut does not account for real concerns over the potential for landslides and other environmental catastrophes. I was in Knott County during the 2022 floods. I have seen first-hand what that looks like. I have been told that it was the training echoes, the type of storms that caused the floods, not deforestation. That may be true. But mudslides could have been prevented had there been more stands of older trees with extensive root systems. Finally, I would add that the proposed plan also does not provide adequate habitat for species such as the Cerulean Warbler, and none of the proposals fully address concerns about Tree of Heaven and the Spotted Lanternfly.

As an environmental writer and concerned resident of the area who has many friends who own land adjacent to the proposed logging sites and who wants to protect both the region and our planet for her children and grandchildren, I strongly recommend that the USFS adopt Alternative 1 with modifications to address the concerns outlined above.

Thank you for your time,

Dr. Dennis