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Comments: The Kentucky Forest Industries Association represents a wide range of National Forest users that not only depend on the Daniel Boone National Forest to support the economic well being of the many rural communities surrounding the forest and a wide range of users that enjoy multiple uses of the forest. These many uses include wood supply for jobs in local communities, wildlife habitat improvement to support hunting activities in the forest and a wide range of recreational uses that will be improved through active management of the forest.

Overall, the Jellico area is transitioning to mature (81 years and older) forest (Figure 1). Data indicate approximately 72 percent of the project area is mature forest which typically exhibits a closed canopy with an understory and/or midstory layer. Under the current management trajectory, apart from some small (less than 10 acres), isolated areas, the entirety of the area is trending towards mature forest. While desired structures, species compositions, and age classes occur in mature forest, the biodiversity provided by young (0-30 years old) and mid-aged (31-80 years old) forest is being lost. To counteract this loss and increase project area biodiversity by providing a mix of habitat for flora and fauna, there is a need for taking action to adjust conditions such that all desired age classes, structures, and species compositions are represented across the area. Accordingly, the purpose of and need for this project is to meet the Forest's goals for management as defined in the Land and Resource Management Plan for the Daniel Boone National Forest (USDA 2004).

We are in full support of the Original Proposal action to approve management activities for the next 40 years on the site from 2024 to 2064. These actions amount to a small amount of management per year considering the large area of the forest that will remain in a non- managed area. This wide range of activity will greatly improve forest health and maintain a wide range of forest ages and habitat for improved wildlife as called for in the forest plan. We strongly encourage moving forward with the original proposal to keep this area of the national forest healthy and better protected from future climate change.