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Organization: Clark County Citizens United, Inc.

Title:

Comments: I represent Clark County Citizens United, Inc., a non-profit 501c4 that represents approximately 6,000 rural landowners in Southwest Washington. The majority of these folks own timberlands. Personally I married into a generational logging company in Clark County, and own timberlands as well. From my home, I look over vast miles of Douglas Fir, to the South, East, West and North. I also look over three burn snags left from the massive Yacolt Burn. We and many of our members are subject to the strong East winds, that in 1902 devastated thousands of acres of forests, much in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest area. Again a fire ravaged through the area in 1910.

When we first bought the land we looked over fields, that now are all forested. My husband planted thousands of trees in the National forest in the 1960s, which are now ready for harvest. One of CCCU's Board members is a forester and former DNR and Fire Commissioner. He remembers planting those trees, also. It is time to harvest those plantations, before they burn down.

Many logging companies and sawmills were shuttered after the Spotted Owl debacle that proved to be worthless. But the environmentalist want to control our area, so they can use the land for free. CCCU members are constantly chasing off trespassers, who build campfires and camp out on our private land. There is far too many trees and vegetation in our rural areas now, and timber surrounds us. It is just a matter of time before another fire will come through and wipe all of it out, with the strong East winds. The Douglas Fir grows like a weed, throughout our region, throwing seeds everywhere. I watched a five acre hay field turn into a five acre forest in three years, caused by one good seed tree.

The National Forest plantations need to be harvested, and those lands should be replanted and treated as a crop. If the trees are planted in prime soil, the rotation production rate is 20 years, and with proper management, those forests will provide for the United State economy in perpetuity. Clark County Citizens United, Inc. fully supports positive changes to the Northwest Forest Plan to allow for more long overdue harvest of the timber.....before they all turn into ashes.