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First name: Mark

Last name: Martinez

Organization: S. Martinez Livestock Inc.

Title:

Comments: April 8, 2016

Kelly Lawrence, District Ranger

Naches Ranger District

10237 Hwy 12 Naches

Naches, WA 98937

Little Crow Restoration Project

Dear Kelly:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Little Crow Restoration Project.

As a permittee, working closely with your range staff, we are given a routing map way in advance of turnout in early June. This is to make sure everyone knows what can be expected of the sheep band, and improve avoidance of potential conflicts. Communication is the key to ensure that what gets put down on paper, is carried out on the ground. And in order to be successful on the ground, we need to keep multiple options available in the future for both grazing and routing of our livestock. We strongly support continued harvest and thinning efforts, and encourage continued road access to all forest users.

Areas of concern;

Road Decommissioning: By closing currently open roads, our herder and sheep will be forced onto main travel routes, increasing potential conflicts with other users. I would ask that any road decommissioning be carefully reviewed to ensure they are being done for good reasons, and are not going to create additional issues at new locations.

Risk of Catastrophic Wildfire: I would encourage utilizing enhanced sheep grazing around the perimeter of the project area and adjacent communities, to reduce the fine fuels, thus decreasing the risk of catastrophic wildfire, and would like to be part of that process.

Riparian Restoration: How long will all of the restoration take? And during the restoration, what measures will be taken to prevent sheep band and other forest users from disturbing the areas? I would like myself and/or the range technician to be involved in any mitigation measures that would impact grazing, and do so well in advance of the grazing season. If not, we will assume it will be normal routing and bed-ground use.

Alternative Routing: I would like to see that key and alternative routing are included within the project area, and would like to request access to alternative routing on 1906 be authorized, as this would be our preferred route off of the allotment to avoid double a pass. I am also anticipating a change in the allotment boundary to add access to this vicinity in the near future through the Domestic Sheep Grazing EIS. I would also ask that phases of activities are done in reasonable timeframes to ensure lengthy trailing would be avoided, as trailing equals weight loss, and undue stress on our livestock.

Deferred Grazing: I am concerned about the length of time this project may take to complete, and the potential impacts it could have on our operation if deferred grazing is requested, therefor I would ask that you avoid deferment whenever possible.

Cumulative Effects: With all of the different projects ongoing across the Forest, on our allotments, we are concerned we would not be able to make up for lost grazing time due to this project. So we want extra efforts to be made to protect, maintain, and/or enhance use of the Naches Sheep Allotment in a manner similar to the use that had occurred prior to implementation of the Little Crow Restoration Project, which I understand to be the range management objective.

I am looking forward to working with you and your staff on these issues.

Sincerely,

Mark Martinez

Mark Martinez

S. Martinez Livestock, Inc.