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Title:

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District Ranger, Naches District

Wenatchee National Forest

10237 US Highway 12

Naches, WA 98937

www.fs.fed.us/nepa/fs-usda-pop.php/?project=46306

Re: Little Crow Restoration Project

Dear Responsible Official,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the upcoming Little Crow Restoration Project on behalf of Boise Cascade Company. Boise Cascade manufactures engineered wood products, plywood, lumber, and particleboard and distributes a broad line of building materials, including wood products manufactured by the company's wood products division. The company is headquartered in Boise, ID, and operates mills that count on wood produced from the National Forests.

I am pleased to see the Forest Service taking on a landscape scale project that will ultimately benefit the identified watersheds as well as the local communities that are in desperate need of wood products from the national forests. I support the purpose and need of this project and am pleased that the Forest Service chose to only analyze a an action and no-action alternative. I am in support of the modified alternative and offer the following comments:

[middot] Please specify how much volume is expected to be harvested on this project

[middot] I'm concerned about the amount of prescribed fire. It has been my experience that the national forests are extremely backlogged in the application of prescribed fire on the landscape. Will this project be prioritized over other projects? I suggest that the forest service look at alternatives to fire such as mastication.

[middot] I'm concerned about the emphasis of creating old forest habitat. While I agree that large trees are important, other types of habitat are important such as stand initiation and shrub habitat. It is inappropriate for all forests to be categorized as LOS.

[middot] I am not in favor having diameter limits because it limits the ability of the silviculturalist to implement the appropriate treatment on the landscape. I suggest leaving all diameter limits out of the environmental assessment and let the silviculturalist write the appropriate prescriptions to better treat the land.

[middot] I appreciate that the forest is enhancing huckleberry habitat and increasing forage in the project area. Many times these types of habitat are lacking on the national forests.

[middot] What is the planned return interval for this project area? It is important that treatments are built to allow options for future management in the project area. Are these treatments designed to be resilient to fire and insects for 20, 30, or 40 years? If not, the prescriptions may need to be revised or a plan for return put in place to ensure that this area is managed to be resilient to disturbances and climate change.

[middot] Will these treatments meaningfully reduce the insect and disease risk in the project area?
I'm concerned that the treatments are not aggressive enough to reduce the risk.

[middot] Please analyze the economic effects of this project on the local community. This project will also have an impact on the county budgets because Secure Rural Schools was not renewed and county payments will now be tied back to federal revenues from timber sales. Please discuss how this project will contribute to both to employment and the county budgets for schools and roads.

[middot] I support work in the riparian areas, many times these areas are neglected and contain the highest amounts of fuels which means they burn hotter during a wildfire. These areas are arguably the most sensitive areas on the forest.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. I look forward to seeing outcomes of this project. Please feel free to contact me if there is any way that I can assist the Forest Service in creating a project that will benefit the three [ldquo]legs of the stool[rdquo], ecological, social and economic. Many times the analysis is skewed toward the ecological benefits, please ensure that social and economic benefits are outlined properly to ensure a balanced project that will not only benefit the ecology of the project area but also the socio-economic needs of the communities.

Regards,

Lindsay Warness

Forest Policy Analyst

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