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First name: Tom

Last name: Cover

Organization: West Virginia Division of Forestry

Title: Director/State Forester

Comments: July 26, 2021

Jon Morgan, District Ranger Cheat-Potomac Ranger District 2499 North Fork Highway Petersburg, WV 26847

RE: Upper Cheat River Project Dear Ranger Morgan:

The purpose of this letter is to express my support for the proposed Upper Cheat River Project. As a long-time forester in the State of West Virginia, I have had concerns regarding the health of Monongahela National Forest (MNF) for many years. It is no secret that forestlands can not flourish unless they are consistently benefiting from sound silvicultural practices and I fear that the MNF has not had such an opportunity for quite some time.

Upon reviewing the 10-year management proposal, I am confident that only good things can be derived from the implementation of a more aggressive management practice designed to improve the overall health of the forest, identify and reduce invasive species, diversify wildlife habitats, increase harvesting and minimize the threat of wildfires. As stewards of the state's only renewable natural resource, it is our responsibility to take all the necessary steps to ensure that all forestlands are preserved for future generations to enjoy.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to assist you in this endeavour.

Sincerely,

Tom Cover

cc:

Shawn Cochran, Superintendent

Monongahela National Forest

Ed Gaunch, Cabinet Secretary

West Virginia Department of Commerce

The Honorable Shelly Moore Capito

United States Senate

The Honorable Joe Manchin

United States Senate

The Honorable David McKinley

United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Alex Mooney

United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Carol Miller

United States House of Representatives