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Organization: Sierra Pacific Industries

Title: Procurement Forester

Comments:

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August 16 , 2024

Kristen Lark - District Ranger

Six Rivers National Forest - Mad River Ranger District

741 State Hwy 36

Bridgeville, CA 95526

RE: Rattail: A Trinity Forest Health & Fire-Resilient Communities Project

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Rattail Project. The following comments are written on behalf of Sierra Pacific Industries.

Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) is a third-generation family-owned forest products company. The company owns and manages over two million acres of timberland in California, Oregon, and Washington. SPI is committed to managing its lands in a responsible and sustainable manner to protect the environment while providing quality wood products & renewable power to consumers.

We are in support of the Rattail Project. It is encouraging to see that the Mad River Ranger District is making progress in implementation of the project. A proactive forest health project like Rattail has the ability to: reduce the potential of future wildfire effects and increase firefighter safety, increase public safety, create resilient forests, and provide economic return to local communities and the forest.

Purpose and Need:

Fortify forest resilience, local communities, critical infrastructure, and exceptional natural resources from catastrophic wildfire.

After visiting the project site, it is clear there is a need for fuels reduction. Stands are currently overstocked and suffering from varying levels of drought and insect mortality as a result. Stands within the project area are vulnerable to large, stand replacing wildfire due to the density and continuity of fuels across the landscape. The vegetative cover in the area, paired with the topography reduces firefighter effectiveness. Some of the forest system roads in the project area are in poor condition, restoration of these roads increases the ease of access and egress for the public and firefighters in an emergency setting.

Proposed Action(s):

We are in support of the proposed actions defined in the Draft EA, however, there are a few points of concern within the logging systems section. The Draft EA states "Landings associated with skyline-cable and ground-based harvest methods would be .25 acres or less ". To have the least amount of skid trails and skyline corridors, landings will have to be used for extended periods of time. To efficiently store logs, top material and

slash that will be coming into landings please consider increasing the maximum size of ground-based and cable-based landings. Keep in mind that cable-based and helicopter logging systems are inherently expensive, look at using ground-based, tethered operations in areas where feasible, instead of skyline or helicopter. This project has the highest probability of success if operators can use ground-based systems on as many acres as possible. With recent improvements in ground-based and tethered equipment, operators can safely and effectively harvest stands that were previously skyline logged.

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We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Rattail Project. The success of this project can protect over 1,500 acres of National Forest land and provide resilient forests, increased safety, protection of infrastructure, and economic return to local communities as well as the Six Rivers National Forest. If you have any questions about our comments or feasibility of this project or future projects, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Miles Schack - RPF #3242
Procurement Forester
Sierra Pacific Industries
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