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First name: Cameron

Last name: Wohlschlegel

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Chris Dowling

District Ranger

Swan Lake Ranger District

RE: East Valley Fuels

I would like to comment in support of the East Valley Fuels Project. As a professional Forester and the Lands & Resource Manager for F.H. Stoltze Land and Lumber in Columbia Falls I believe it is imperative to play an active role in managing our forests. I believe your proposed action of forest management to promote diversity in the forest, reduce wildfire and fuels within the WUI, improve riparian ecosystems, and to provide economic stability and products to the local communities are great reasons and objectives in managing the forest within the project area.

It is very important to keep trees healthy and growing on our National Forest Lands. Especially those that are suited for timber production! This project will improve the vigor and health of the residual trees in the commercial thinning harvest units while allowing new growth to occur in the regeneration harvest areas. Having these regeneration harvest areas is important not only to create openings for new desirable species to establish but also creates forage opportunities for wildlife and dis-continuity of fuels which is important for wildfire management and fuel reduction.

Utilizing commercial forest management to harvest these dead, dying, and other trees to improve residual tree health and reduce fuel loading is a great way to make our forests more resilient to both future insect outbreaks and wildfire events. These forest management practices also have the added benefit of generating jobs and revenue for our local communities through supplying sawmills with product and providing for additional recreational opportunities within the forest.

I would also like to recommend minimizing full obliteration of roads within the project area and promoting barriers and debris in the beginning of road templates in lieu of full obliteration. This allows easy equipment access in use in management of the forest at a later date while discouraging illegal motorized use of the road. Also, I believe the use of temporary roads should be utilized to maximize the access to treatable units and acres where permanent roads in certain areas of the forest might be restricted or limited.

I also encourage the Forest Service to use Designation by Prescription (DxP) on the East Valley Fuels. F.H. Stoltze Land & Lumber Co. has purchased multiple timber sales using DxP as harvest prescriptions. DxP improves efficiencies in sale prep and saves money using less paint and man hours to complete pre-sale setup. Using a DxP prescription also allows operators to remain engaged in the harvest; actively making decisions to meet silviculturist goals and objectives.

Specific to the project area we are concerned there aren't many treatments planned in the North part of the Project Area. The North part of this project area is in dire need of management. I know because I live just North of Lake Blaine and get a first-class view of the project area daily. If access is the issue, Stoltze has worked with multiple landowners that have lands directly adjacent to this project area. We would be happy to help facilitate access to more potential management areas through our relationships we have built with landowners and neighbors. We also happen to own land directly bordering USFS in the South part of the project area and unit

#225. This unit is labeled as non-commercial treatment. We think there are possible opportunities to extend our road system in this area and manage more USFS property with actual commercial harvest. Please reach out to us for temporary road use permits or contact information for access through other private parcels particularly around HU 241, 239, and 242 if there is a desire to do more than the proposed non-commercial management which generally costs money. I personally know landowners in that area would like to see more treatment on the USFS side of the fence. Specific to the North end of the project area Weaver's, Orem's, and Lincoln Chute should be

Again, if we can help out at all to facilitate access so more management is conducted within the project area please do not hesitate to reach out and please continue to provide me with any updated information pertaining to this project.

Sincerely,

Cameron Wohlschlegel

Lands & Resource Manager

F.H. Stoltze Land & Lumber Company