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First name: Arthur

Last name: Stewart

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Mr. Hatfield,

I support the West Sheffield project. I am a retired member of the Warren County School District Board of School Directors where I served for 16 years. I am also a former solicitor for over 30 townships and school districts located within the Allegheny National Forest. In these positions I learned the great importance of the connections between a healthy Allegheny National Forest and healthy surrounding communities. The mutual health is advanced in numerous ways, including direct financial interconnection under the Weeks Act, enjoyment of the Forest by local residents, vital community services for ANF employees, and the list goes on and on.

Unfortunately, the Allegheny National Forest is not healthy. The age class disparity, present on the Forest for decades, continues to be a grave source of worry. I personally own property next to the Forest and I both recreate upon and travel through the Forest regularly. In these instances I observe far too many occasions of poor ANF health, from a lack of wildlife, to over-age trees posing danger, to unhealthy trees too susceptible to disease and invasive species.

I am pleased to learn of the West Sheffield project because if the project's goals are achieved the health of the ANF will be improved. It just so happens that I spend a great deal of my time, in the ANF, in and near the West Sheffield area. Because I am familiar with this particular area my observations are, I think, particularly fitting, and I am grateful that you have selected this area of the forest for treatment.

While I am no longer a member of the Allegheny Forest Alliance, I read the AFA's comment letter dated March 17, 2026. I agree with the comments in that letter and would like to incorporate the AFA's comments into my comments.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important project.

Sincerely,

Arthur Stewart