



May 20, 2019

Scott Tangenberg, Acting Forest Supervisor
Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest
215 Melody Lane
Wenatchee, WA 98801

Re: Recap of April 30 Forest Service/Timber Industry Meeting

Dear Scott:

This letter is to provide a recap of the Okanogan-Wenatchee/Timber Industry meeting that was held at the Leavenworth Ranger District on April 30, 2019. A copy of the attendees is attached. AFRC would like to thank the good turnout of District Rangers and other Forest personnel. We thought it was one of the most productive in recent years.

Following introductions and reading of the anti-trust statement Forest Supervisor Mike Williams announced that he would be retiring on May 3. He then introduced Scott Tangenberg who will be the Acting Forest Supervisor for several months. Scott is the Deputy Forest Supervisor on the Stanislaus.

Tom updated the group on the work that AFRC is doing in Washington DC and Matt updated the group on the recently completed 2019 Washington legislative session. Tom also gave an update on pertinent legal issues that AFRC's legal team has been involved with. Mike Williams reported that Kathy Johnson had been selected to be the new District Ranger on the Tonasket District, and Chris Furr is the Ranger on the Methow Valley District.

The group then discussed the various ongoing projects on the Forest and some of the problems and issues that are rising up. The Mission project did not sell and there was some mention that both Mission and Walter Springs reoffer may be sold using GNA. While some thought this had merit, those sales will not contribute back to the GNA fund. The group discussed the possibility of using DXP on the Mission project which would allow more trees per acre to be harvested. The next project on the Methow Valley Ranger District will be Twisp River. Also discussed was the reason some sales are going no bid including light volumes per acre, seasonality of the operating schedule, no larger trees marked, small units, and requiring cut-to-length. The Mt. Hull project will be out for objection soon and part of this project will be sold in 2019. Another FY19 sale is Swauk Pine. It is in the objection resolution stage and scheduled to be sold in the 4th quarter. Purchasers are worried that this project may not be economically feasible to operate because 82% of the logging is to be done by skyline. There is also a lot of small pine in the project area. The Taneum Project on the Cle Elum District is out for Draft EA

comments. The NEPA work is being done by a contractor and the project has moved along quite well. The Upper Wenatchee Pilot project recently completed scoping and the focus is to treat as many acres as possible during this entry. The NEPA work is being contracted out as well. The group talked about the difficulty of required helicopter logging. Besides being costly there are few contractors still in the business and their summers are usually tied up with fires. Some helicopter is being discussed for the Upper Wenatchee Pilot and for Taneum. To make these units work the forest needs to remove high volumes per acre and have short flight distances.

We discussed the issue of underrun of timber volumes on the respective projects. Especially the Huck project on the Naches Ranger District that is underrunning substantially. Part of the problem that occurred on this sale is that the max diameter for harvest was 24.9" which corresponds to a 31.6" diameter at the stump. Many of the trees that were originally thought to be take trees had stump diameters over 31.6 inches and had to be left thus creating the underrun. Jordan Lanman suggested that the prescriptions should call for only leaving 40 sq. ft. of basal area instead of the 80 sq. ft. currently required. The revenues back to the Forest for restoration work will be significantly less because of the underrun. Kelly Lawrence said they hoped to avoid this problem on the next project on the Naches (Finn) by counting any tree over 24.9" dbh as a leave tree, thus allowing more of smaller diameter trees to be taken.

Dennis Valdez went through the remainder of FY19 program. The Forest had originally planned to sell 41 mmbf last fall, but the target fell to 26 mmbf which includes 6 mmbf of firewood. Projects yet to sell include Mt. Hull, Swauk Pine, Walter Spring resale, Skywalker resale, and add on volume.

The Forest is poised to do better with future projects like Little Crow, Finn, Taneum, and the Upper Wenatchee Pilot project all getting close to completion. The long-term timber target for the Forest is 35-40 mmbf, but AFRC and our members believe this can be higher if the Forest uses the GNA tool and more CE's. We strongly believe it comes down to treating as many acres in each project mechanically and taking more volume per acre. A copy of the five-year timber sale plan is included.

Finally we appreciate the Forest taking the time to meet with AFRC and our members. Our next meeting will be held on July 23. We will meet again in Leavenworth and tour the Upper Wenatchee Pilot Project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom Partin".

Tom Partin
AFRC Consultant
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Lake Oswego, Oregon 97035