



Lummi Indian Business Council

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'Working together as one to Preserve, Promote and Protect our Sche Lang en'

June 26, 2020

Erin Uloth, District Ranger
Mount Baker Ranger District
810 Highway 20
Sedro-Woolley, Washington 98284

Subject: North Fork Nooksack Vegetation Management Project

Dear Erin:

Thank you for your letter, dated May 26th of this year, conveying the scoping notice for the North Fork Nooksack Vegetation Management Project. This letter is our response to your request for comments about the project and possible actions identified in scoping notice.

We believe that a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is essential for a planning project of this size in a geologically sensitive area such as the Canyon Creek Watershed. Our request is that the USFS undertake and complete a comprehensive EIS before finalizing any plans for management actions or subprojects in the planning area.

Our request is based on a number of factors, including:

- The total size of the timber harvesting and thinning components in the plan; and,
- The ongoing history of debris events and flood damage in the Canyon Creek watershed following prior management actions; and,
- The inherent geologic (slope) instability present throughout the project area; and,
- The importance of the Canyon Creek to ESA-listed species, including: Chinook salmon, steelhead trout, and bull trout char; and,
- The cultural importance of the area and the natural resources contained therein to the people of the Lummi Nation; and,
- Identifying and fully considering possible consequences of management actions is a vital step in avoiding adverse impacts and promoting ecosystem recovery in the project area.

In consideration of these factors, we believe that it is essential for the Forest Service to complete a full and comprehensive EIS as part of its planning process.

We appreciate our long-standing, good working relationship with the Service. We look forward to receiving further information about the project and to working with the Service in developing the framework necessary for completing a comprehensive EIS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Merle Jefferson'.

Merle Jefferson, Director,
Lummi Natural Resources Department