



February 4, 2015

District Ranger Reidy  
Tonasket District Ranger  
1 West Winesap  
Tonasket, WA 98855

Dear Mr. Reidy,

We are writing to submit comments on behalf of the North Central Washington Forest Health Collaborative on the Annie Restoration Project. As you are aware, our collaborative's Projects Workgroup has been tracking and engaging in the development of this project over the past year. We are enthused to see the Tonasket Ranger District develop this project through the Forest Restoration Strategy, and believe implementation of restoration needs on this landscape is important. Individual members of our collaborative have submitted more thorough comments on the project independently, while this letter aims to capture our collaborative thinking in complement to those letters.

The North Central Washington Forest Health Collaborative, facilitated by the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board, is a diverse group of timber industry representatives, conservationists, tribal government, elected officials, and local, state and federal land managers working together to obtain the resources and community support to increase implementation of landscape-scale forest restoration on the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest in Chelan and Okanogan counties. The collaborative strives to advance forest health through transparent actions that improve forest resiliency, preserve terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitat, protect natural resources, provide recreational opportunities, promote utilization of natural resources, and support local economies in Chelan and Okanogan Counties.

Our collaborative supports the Annie Restoration Project's identified Purpose and Need for work in this landscape, and appreciated the description of the landscape evaluation leading to the identification of a landscape prescription. We are interested in a discussion with you and your ID Team in the near future about the full watershed analysis area that the Annie Restoration Project is included within so that we understand the context of the landscape, and how this restoration project fits into a larger landscape plan. In this discussion we'd also like to walk through the details of how the landscape evaluation drove specific treatment areas. Please let us know a suitable time to set up this discussion in person or by phone and webinar.

While we support the restoration strategy's focus on identifying areas on the landscape to treat where we can increase resiliency and restore ecological function, we recognize that the success of implementation requires integration of social and economic considerations as well. Our collaborative includes membership with expertise from the timber industry as well as local community members of the Okanogan, and we offer this expertise in project planning and implementation, should it help in delivering a more efficient and economically sound project.

In our review of the Environmental Analysis, we noted that quite a few actions will only be accomplished as funding is available. In addition to working with you to offer expertise in designing an efficient and economically smart project implementation plan, we look forward to identifying additional funding sources to ensure all restoration actions are implemented. Depending on the appraisal, it may be more efficient to use stewardship contracting to achieve necessary restoration tasks.

The NCWFHC looks forward to collaborating on large-scale restoration projects in the Tonasket Ranger District. The NCWFHC is committed to finding efficient and productive ways to engage with the District to increase the pace of restoration, a goal shared by the NCWFHC and the Forest Service.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Ward". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" being more prominent than the last name "Ward".

Paul Ward, Yakama Nation  
NCWFHC Co-Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lloyd McGee". The signature is cursive and clearly legible, with the first name "Lloyd" and the last name "McGee" being distinct.

Lloyd McGee, The Nature Conservancy  
NCWFHC Co-Chair