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Plan Revision  
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You may comment on any parts of the DEIS and PLRMP. The following topics will help you focus your comments and help us to better respond to your comments. You do not have to fill in every section in order to comment. At the end of the form, you will find a place to comment on other issues, alternatives, management direction and monitoring. Feel free to use additional pages.

Issues in the DEIS (please check the topics you are commenting on)

- ☒ Forest Vegetation ☐ Habitat Diversity ☐ Recreation  
☐ Special Areas including Roadless Areas and Wilderness  
☐ Other Concerns

Forest Managers recommend that a forest should contain an equal balance between late successional habitat and early successional habitat. Nevertheless, the preferred alternative C proposes 28-32% late successional habitat, only 8-10% early successional habitat, and creates five times more late successional habitat than alternative A.

Early successional habitat is the preferred habitat for a number of wildlife species including grouse, woodcock, and rabbits. As the amount of early successional habitat

decreases, so does the prevalence of these wildlife species that are dependent upon this habitat for their continued existence.

Additionally, there are endangered species that are dependent upon an adequate amount of early successional habitat to ensure survival. Given the decreasing amount of early successional habitat that is proposed under the preferred alternative C, this alternative increases the possibility of these endangered species becoming extinct.

Last, the current amount of early successional habitat serves as an indicator for the amount of mature timber that will be present at a later date. Therefore, if the preferred alternative C is adopted, an inadequate amount of early successional forest will be present, which will ultimately lead to an inadequate amount of mature timber at a later date after what is now mature timber begins to die or is harvested.

This lack of mature timber will have a substantial impact on the overall health and diversity of the Allegheny National Forest. Accordingly, rather than relying on disturbances (such as fires, oil and gas production, etc.) to create greater levels of early successional habitat, the preferred alternative must be rescinded and revised so that, as recommended, there is an equal balance between late successional habitat and early successional habitat.

It should also be noted that the indicator wildlife species selected for analysis in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in great part require late successional habitat, thereby justifying the increased amount of such habitat proposed under alternative C. If different species had been selected (e.g. grouse, woodcock, rabbits, etc.), the conclusion could have just as easily been reached that more early successional habitat is required. In other words, it appears as though the indicator species selected were selected in order to

The Draft Environment Impact Statement, using the viability outcome scale as it applies to the 77 indicator species, also indicates that none of the four alternatives will have a significant impact on species diversity. Therefore, given that an increase in the amount of late successional habitat is not necessary for continued species diversity, the Proposed Plan must be rescinded and a preferred alternative must be created which puts more emphasis on the creation of early successional habitat and creates an equal balance of early successional and late successional habitat as recommended by Forest Managers. It should also be noted that such an alternative would not have a significant impact on the amount of late successional habitat because, due to the reality of under-harvesting caused by budgetary constraints, the goal for achieving an adequate level of late successional habitat will still be met.