



# WARREN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
6820 MARKET STREET  
RUSSELL PA 16345-3406

AMY J. STEWART  
SUPERINTENDENT

April 22, 2019

(via email [comments-eastern-allegheny-bradford@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-eastern-allegheny-bradford@fs.fed.us))

District Ranger, USDA Forest Service  
Allegheny National Forest  
Bradford Ranger District  
29 Forest Service Drive  
Bradford, PA 16701

Dear District Ranger Hatfield:

These comments are submitted to the Allegheny National Forest (ANF) in support of the "Cherry Run Project". These comments are submitted by the unanimous vote of the Warren County School District Board of School Directors. The Warren County School District (WCSD) is a public school district; we educate over 4,000 pupils.

The WCSD is interested in all projects occurring on the ANF, including timber harvest projects. As noted in your 2007 Forest Plan "timber harvest supports local logging and related forest product processing, sustaining local jobs and income..." "Revenues from...timber sales provide financial support to local schools." The WCSD is also interested in the issues of ANF health; many of our student-attendees, staff and graduates either recreate or work in the forest; good environmental stewardship is also part of our curriculum.

The WCSD is particularly interested in the Cherry Run Project because the project is located within the boundaries of the WCSD. We school directors have been worried about the poor health of the ANF in general, and by coincidence several of us directors (and our superintendent) have made trips to the Cherry Run area to examine the poor health of the vegetation located there.

On our visits to Cherry Run we observed a forest that suffers a serious age class imbalance. We saw many trees in the mature category and very few trees in the early or young category. It was of grave concern to us that the many trees in the mature category were in very poor health. Readily apparent to us were very large diameter hardwoods with broken tops, signs of red rot or infestation by invasive species, and other health problems.

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We believe that very aggressive management is required. We concur with the several purposes outlined in the proposal including a range of forest age classes and vegetative states, the implementation of good silvicultural and reforestation practices, and the addressing of non-native invasive species. We inquire whether the proposal does all that it should to meet the serious needs; for example, we suggest the treatment of more acres and to expand the regeneration treatments to more aggressively pursue the cultivation of early structural stage vegetation.

While we support the stated purposes of the project, we would also ask you to expand the purposes as follows: first it would be beneficial to reference the benefits cited in the 2007 Forest Plan, namely how this project will help generate sustaining local jobs and provide support to local schools. Second, we ask that the documents do a better job of stating the role of the project in the larger role of remediating the serious age class imbalance. There are at least two elements of the 2007 Forest Plan which should constitute this greater context, namely the recommended age classes and the Allowable Sale Quantity (ASQ). It has been acknowledged many times that achieving the ASQ contained in the 2007 Forest Plan would be a key factor in remediating the age class imbalance. It would be beneficial to see how each project factors into the larger problem of age class imbalance to help ANF stakeholders understand a) when the slide into worsening imbalance will halt; and b) (if the slide reverses) how fast strides are being made to return to the desired age class balance.

Sincerely,

Donna Zariczny  
Warren County School District  
Board President