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To: ceq_nepa@fs.fed.us
cc:
Subject: NEPA implementation

CQ222

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To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on proposed changes to the NEPA. As rural landowners, my family and I are intimately aware of the issues at hand and we are concerned about any proposed changes.

We not only support the current requirements under NEPA, we would like to see stronger safeguards built to ensure our well-being, the well being of our neighbors, and most importantly, future generations. Specifically, improvements could be made in notifying citizens, locally, regionally, and nationally, of proposed projects so that comments could be gathered from those most interested/affected. Indeed, said comments are a critical part of our great democracy and those who make informed decisions make better decisions.

A fine example of how well NEPA works as currently implemented can be seen at the North end of Washington state's Olympic Peninsula. In the late 1990s it showed that dismantling two old dams on the Elwha River would provide so many benefits by increasing the salmon run there that the loss of electricity from the dams paled in comparison. Plans to take down the dams are moving forward.

Another example of how well NEPA works is the restrictions placed on logging operations on USFS land that destroy critical habitat, not just for birds and fish, but people as well. Personal experience and observation in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest demonstrated clear-cutting the head-waters of watersheds (especially on steep slopes) caused serious water-quality issues.

I find it interesting NEPA is being reviewed for moderization, when far older and more outdated laws are not. For instance, the General Mining Law of 1872 is clearly inadequate and a better candidate for review.

At a minimum, keep NEPA as is; and if changes need to be made, improve notification of the tax-paying public, and increase our opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

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