

CQ441

LASSEN COUNTY FARM BUREAU
PO Box 151
Susanville, CA 96130

Sept. 20, 2002

NEPA Task Force
PO Box 221150
Salt Lake City, UT 84122

Dear People,

The Lassen County Farm Bureau would like to submit the following comments that demonstrate the need for reviewing and revising the NEPA process.

We live in a small, rural northern California county that has been devastated by Forest Service lack of management in the last 10 years. Our economy has been almost eliminated by shutting down of the forests for logging and grazing. NEPA review was a part of this because of the costs it created and it opened up the forest to many baseless lawsuits designed to stop logging and grazing.

We feel the huge wildfires throughout the west this year were caused by the Forest Service's lack of management in implementing grazing and logging which could help reduce fuels. Our skies were thickened with smoke these last 2 summers and millions of acres of the west burned. This demonstrates current decision making processes are not functioning properly as these devastating fires are having huge negative environmental impacts.

- Economic interests must be given standing to challenge NEPA actions to the same extent as environmental interests.
- NEPA must consider the human environment to reflect the economic devastation Forest Service management has created.
- The "no action alternative" needs to be clearly defined as the status quo.
- CEQ and the action agencies should better define and delineate when an Environmental Analysis is sufficient and when an Environmental Impact Statement is required.
- CEQ and the action agencies must regain control over defining the scope and requirements of NEPA analysis.
- CEQ and the action agencies need to specify with much more clarity the level of analysis that is sufficient to meet the requirements of NEPA and the type of information required to be analyzed.
- You need to narrow the definition of "affected interests" who can appeal NEPA decisions to those who are actually affected.

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- Regulations should provide that appeals must contain specific and substantive information regarding the grounds for the appeal before it may be considered.
- State and local governments should be given more involvement in the NEPA process.
- Site-specific NEPA analyses should be limited to whether the proposed action is consistent with an applicable overall use plan.
- CEQA regulations must be amended to permit timely projects beneficial to the environment such as hazardous fuel reduction projects that promote the Healthy Forest Initiative.
- Appeals in site-specific NEPA analyses should be limited to whether the proposed action is consistent with any applicable land use plan.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,



Buck Parks, President
Lassen County Farm Bureau