



KENTUCKY HEARTWOOD

Protecting the Beauty and Wellbeing of Kentucky's Native Forests

Jason Nedlo, District Ranger
Daniel Boone National Forest
761 South Laurel Road
London, Kentucky 40744

RE: London Ranger District Wildlife Opening Maintenance

January 3, 2017

Dear District Ranger Nedlo,

On November 22, 2016 we received an email from the Daniel Boone National Forest with the subject line "USDA Forest Service Wildcat Branch Headwaters Reforestation Project Update." Contrary to the subject line, the attached letter was a scoping document for the London Ranger District Wildlife Opening Maintenance project dated November 21, 2016. As of today, the project has not been listed on the Daniel Boone NF Projects page, and the January 2017 through March 2017 SOPA has the estimated start of scoping for as February, 2017. The scoping letter itself states that comments should be submitted by January 6, 2017. In order to facilitate public comment Kentucky Heartwood posted the scoping document on our website along with a project description and instructions on how to comment. We hope that this facilitates public input.

In terms of what you have proposed, Kentucky Heartwood strongly supports the transition to native vegetation in wildlife openings in the Cane Creek and Mill Creek Wildlife Management Areas. We very much appreciate the approach described in the scoping document, and think that it will greatly benefit a significant range of native biodiversity while supporting multiple forest uses. It is the type of management that we like to inform our members and supporters about in order to show how the Forest Service, when given proper resources and support, can carry out positive, proactive restoration and management for native biodiversity on our shared national forest lands.

In the scoping letter you state, "In 2016, collaboration efforts began for the London Ranger District's Pine Creek Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Project." Can you please clarify if the aforementioned collaboration is part of the Pine Creek IRMS/Collaboration process (even though the Pine Creek IRMA includes only a minor portion of the Cane Creek WMA and none of the Mill Creek WMA). If it is a separate process, please explain in the EA how this collaborative process was designed and who participated in it. While we are pleased with the proposal, and do not participate in every meeting relating to the Daniel Boone NF, we are usually aware of such meetings and collaborative efforts.

As noted in your December 21, 2016 email to me regarding the White Fringeless Orchid Restoration Project, the Forest Service has some flexibility regarding how to carry out scoping. However, the

scoping process as typically applied has proven over the years to be valuable for both the public and the Forest Service in the development, analysis, and implementation of projects. We hope that what happened here is just a “glitch” and not representative of a change in policy on the Daniel Boone NF. And while we do not want to see a good project like this bound up in process and “red tape,” we do think that steps need to be made to ensure that the public receives proper notification and opportunity to comment.

Thank you for considering these comments. We hope that the project is approved and implemented successfully.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Scheff". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Jim Scheff, Director
Kentucky Heartwood
P.O. Box 1486
Berea, KY 40403

(859) 334-0845
jim@kyheartwood.org