Dave & Pamela Harlan

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April 24, 2000

USDA Forest Service
Content Analysis Enterprise Team
Attn: UFP, Building 2, Suite 295
5500 Amelia Earhart Drive
Salt Lake City, UT 84116

Dear Sir/Madam:

Enclosed are my comments regarding the "Unified Federal Policy for Ensuring a Watershed Approach to Federal Land and Resource Management", published for comment in the federal register on February 22, 2000:

I am diametrically opposed to the proposed "Unified Federal Policy for Ensuring a Watershed Approach to Federal Land and Resource Management".

The right and authority of the states in implementation of the Clean Water Act and the private property rights of those landowners with property located within these watersheds must be recognized and acted upon. State and local governments should make the ultimate decisions regarding watershed planning, as well as prioritizing action toward federal natural resource goals. These decisions must be made by competent local residents with a vested interest in the subject area, who are prepared to live with and among the consequences of their actions over the long term. Above all else, these decisions must be based upon complete, current, competent and accurate science and in consideration of all of the pertinent facts. This can best be assured at a local level. Federal agencies, driven by ever changing incumbent agendas, are historically at their best setting overall policy and themes – not implementation.

If federal land management agencies are indeed interested in proper resource management on a unified basis, a sincere commitment must be made to actively work with state and local governments to achieve this. In direct contrast to this document, a paper detailing all relevant federal agenda, including the proposed goals and objectives, together with the rationale for conclusions, would be an appropriate start. This paper should be immediately made available to all interested parties, again, with the ultimate decisions regarding implementation left up to the local jurisdictions.

Sincerely,

Dave Harlan

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