



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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29 May 2008

David Clouse
Fish and Wildlife Program Manager
Department of the Army
Public Works Environmental Division
ATTN: IMWE-LEW-PWE
Box 339500 MS 17 (Clouse)
Fort Lewis, WA 98433-9500

Dear Mr. Clouse,

I have reviewed the *Management Plan for 2008 EPA Performance Track Renewal Application for the Western Gray Squirrel (Sciurus griseus griseus), Fort Lewis, Washington* as per your request. I would like to commend you on your proactive approach for protection and enhancement of the Fort Lewis western gray squirrel population and its associated habitat. As you are aware, this population represents our only existing opportunity for restoring the species in western Washington. As a federal landowner no action is required on your part, however it is clear that you recognize the benefits of improving the status of this state-threatened species.

The population monitoring and habitat enhancement work are key elements of the proposed program. Population levels are critically low. Maintaining connectivity between the various population centers is instrumental to preventing population collapse. Similarly, the habitat management and enhancement activities in which you engage are helping to combat the detrimental affects of fire suppression and other human-related activities that have led to large-scale habitat loss and degradation. Collectively these activities will increase the carrying capacity of the habitat and encourage a favorable population response by western gray squirrels.

Thank you for your efforts to improve the health of Washington's western gray squirrel population.

Sincerely,


Mary Linders
Wildlife Biologist

Cc: Harriet Allen