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First name: Caer  
Last name: Reider  
Organization:  
Title:  
Comments:  
Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project

Jul 17, 2019

Forest Supervisor James Melonas

Dear Forest Supervisor Melonas,

We are members of WildEarth Guardians, Earth Justice, and Greenpeace, so the environment is crucial to us. We understand that forests have been allowed to overgrow, causing disastrous wildfires, and need to be addressed. But the best long-range goals of really diverse and healthy forests must be the goal. We'd like to address the Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project.

1. An EA is inappropriate for a project of this scale and complexity that impacts many threatened and sensitive species, old growth forests, roadless areas and streams and riparian areas. Because this project will have significant impacts to these and other resources, a thorough, site-specific analysis of all environmental impacts in an Environmental Impact Statement is required.
2. The Forest Service must analyze a full range of alternatives to the agency's proposal, including the Santa Fe Conservation Alternative submitted by WildEarth Guardians and others.
3. The Forest Service must identify and implement the minimum road system on a landscape scale and employ a thoughtful, strategic approach to assuring public access while reducing negative impacts from forest roads to water quality and aquatic habitats, and improving watersheds and forest resiliency by returning expensive, deteriorating, and seldom-used forest roads to the wild.
4. The Forest Service must consider the best available science. The agency cannot cherry-pick the science and data to support its proposal while ignoring contrary, credible views and data.
5. Climate change intensifies the adverse impacts associated with tree thinning, prescribed burning, and roads. The Forest Service must consider the risks of increased disturbance when analyzing the proposed project, as part of the affected environment, and as part of the agency's hard look at impacts.
6. The Forest Service must analyze the cumulative impacts of the proposed project with all other past, present and foreseeable future projects within the broader landscape, including the Hyde Park and Pacheco Canyon projects, livestock grazing, and motorized use.

Sincerely,

Caer Reider  
511 FULTON LN  
SANTA FE, NM 87505  
chrismontrose5@gmail.com

