

Date submitted (Mountain Standard Time): 6/26/2019 2:50:46 PM
First name: Douglas
Last name: Conwell
Organization:
Title:
Comments:
Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project

Jun 26, 2019

Forest Supervisor James Melonas

Dear Forest Supervisor Melonas,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Scoping Document for the Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project. I appreciate the Forest Service soliciting public comment on this project, but have a number of concerns with the Forest Service's proposal:

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,

Douglas Conwell
PO Box 8534
Santa Fe, NM 87504
earthwalks1@yahoo.com

Mr. James Melonas *J.M.*
Forest Supervisor
Santa Fe National Forest
11 Forest Drive
Santa Fe, NM 87508

Re: Scoping Comments for the Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project

Dear Mr. Melonas,

I add my voice to those asking you to protect the forests above Santa Fe by preparing an Environmental Impact Statement that acknowledges the significant cumulative impacts and scientific controversy of extensive clearing and burning over many decades.

Roadless forests above Santa Fe should be protected as Wilderness to stabilize the climate and provide opportunities for outdoor recreation critical to Santa Fe's economy. Clearing vegetation and burning in roadless areas does nothing to improve the safety of residents living adjacent to the forest.

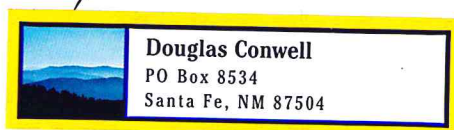
Most old roads should be completely obliterated instead of improved for access by tree clearing equipment. Roads harm water supplies, degrade wildlife habitat, spread invasive plants and disease and allow access to arsonists and wildlife poachers.

Instead of reducing risk, cleared areas may become more flammable by encouraging the growth of combustible grasses, shrubs and small trees and opening forests to drying sunlight and wind.

Public health is negatively impacted by repeated burning close to urban areas. There is no known safe level of exposure to small particulate matter in smoke. In addition, I am concerned about the cumulative exposure of people and wildlife to toxic fire accelerants.

It is difficult to provide meaningful comments due to the lack of site-specific information and the short 30 day comment period. Please provide more detail and extend the comment period to 90 days.

Sincerely,



Date submitted (Mountain Standard Time): 8/5/2019 12:00:00 AM

First name: Douglas

Last name: Conwell

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