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Organization:

Title:

Comments:

Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project

Jun 25, 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.
- We live in a critical, crucial time today; and the values, priorities, lifestyles, plans and actions we adopt will determine whether Earthly Life sinks or swims, so to speak. I consider you plan for the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, which I have visited, to be very lopsided in favor of exploitation and to disfavor the value of the inherent natural balance of the life community that has evolved here for thousands, even millions of years. This would be a dire mistake, so I take this opportunity to urge you to reconsider, and think more of the Future of Life than just more of the same old, same old that has led us to the present crisis.

Sincerely,

Craig Downer
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