

Date submitted (Mountain Standard Time): 7/1/2019 10:15:41 PM
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Organization:
Title:
Comments:
Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project PLEASE READ

Jul 1, 2019

Forest Supervisor James Melonas

Dear Forest Supervisor Melonas,

Thank you for giving me the chance to comment on the Scoping Document for the Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project.

I have read both your proposal, and that of the 'better plan' of the various groups that oppose your proposal, and it seems that the PRIMARY DIFFERENCE is one of the SCIENTIFICALLY-PROVEN NEED FOR GENTLENESS (and they reference their data to prove their points, a great benefit to all of us who are interested in reading the reports themselves): The plans of the Sierra Club, Wildlife Guardians, etc., use SCIENTIFIC DATA to provide plans which would mitigate humans' interference and control of unnecessary burning and removal of entire ecological systems in an attempt to prevent absolutely terrible wildfires.

So, although I appreciate the Forest Service soliciting public comment on this project, I -- and many others, who will also be writing to you using this basic set of comments -- have a number of serious 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, 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. In order to be scientifically valid, 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. THIS SHOULD BE A NO-BRAINER! If you are cherry-picking which science and data you're willing to include, you're AUTOMATICALLY invalidating both your methods & your results. YOU'RE NOT USING THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD, BUT ONLY THE 'APPEARANCE' OF THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD. It's the difference between costuming yourself as a bear and BEING AN ACTUAL BEAR!
5. CLIMATE CHANGE INTENSIFIES THE ADVERSE IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH TREE THINNING, PRESCRIBED BURNING, AND ROADS. I would hope that the Forest

Service would 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.

With all of the above understood, I also understand that most of the decisions that will be made are made on the highest levels of power, and I really hope that you have enough power to change what has been proposed so that it is more amenable to keeping the Santo Cristos Mountain the lovely, wild place that it is now.

Thank you for reading these letters; I know your job is hard to do in the present political setup, but the land -- and ALL of the organisms depending on their natural habitats -- are depending on you. (No pressure, hee, hee!)

Sincerely,

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