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July 8, 2019

James Melonas  
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,

As a US taxpayer and long time (30+ years) visitor to Santa Fe and other parts of my favorite state, New Mexico, I'm deeply concerned about the above project.

**COMMENT PERIOD:** Given the enormous size of this project, the public comment period is far too short. And the repeated response by the Forest Service employees that **there will be no Environmental Impact Statement regarding its effects on our beloved forest** is distressing. As a comparison, it took longer – and with more public input – to approve the small Railyard Project, compared to the 50,000 acres in this project. Why there is such a rush to push this permanent cutting and burning of our forests? I'm requesting that you **please extend the comment period to 90 days** to allow a more democratic process.

**MITIGATING WILDFIRE DAMAGE.** The Forest Service argues that the entire forest needs to be thinned and burned. However, the research of [Dr Chad Hansen](#) and [Dr Jack Cohen](#) shows that **the most effective mitigation of damaged property in the event of wildfire is to directly treat around homes and structures**. This current science must be considered carefully to avoid making tragic and irreversible decisions.

**SCIENTIFIC OPINIONS.** Please allow **scientists with experience in forestry**, such as [Dominick Della Salla PhD](#), to provide their opinions during this critical time of massive loss of species, habitat and plants in the Santa Fe area – and throughout the world – before settling on the final draft of this plan.

**PROTECT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE.** The last thing we need is to cut our carbon sequestering plants. They provide Santa Fe's **only buffer against the climate crisis**. We need every tree and every plant to help bring moisture and rain; to keep the ground cool as the temperatures rise; and to reduce winds and the spread of pests and other parasites on trees that occur with thinning.

**HARMFUL CHEMICALS.** I also ask that you consider the health of the wildlife and the public before using aerial ignitions containing **potassium permanganate, ethylene glycol and diesel fuel**. Please consider how these **harmful chemicals** affect not just health and well-being – but also impact the economy, tourism and reputation of Santa Fe as one of the cleanest cities in the country. Many citizens of Santa Fe are complaining about current fires and the health effects. Unfortunately, the equally-impacted wildlife has no voice in this discussion.

**ROAD ACCESS.** I'm also concerned about opening roads (whether lightly loaded or inventoried roadless areas), which increases our wilderness to further exploitation by industry. This can degrade wildlife habitat, spread invasive species – and allow arsonist and wildlife poachers free access. Instead of improving access, many roads in the forest should be completely obliterated.

Thank you for considering my requests.

Sincerely,

Julia Henriques