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First name: Jan

Last name: Tomski

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

Comment on the project

Dear Mr. James 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 will be necessary.

2. The Forest Service is obligated to 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 would also be advised to 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 would be best informed by the best available science. The agency would obtain the best results by considering all the science and data to support its proposal.

5. Climate change intensifies the adverse impacts associated with tree thinning, prescribed burning, and roads. The Forest Service is asked to 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 is likely to be best informed by 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.

Thank you for your time in carefully considering this matter. My family and I often enjoy the natural beauty of the New Mexico forests, and are very interested in their preservation.

Sincerely,

Jan Towski
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