

June 10, 2019

Mr. James Melonas, Forest Supervisor  
Mr. Gennaro Falco, Forestry Program Manager  
Santa Fe National Forest  
11 Forest Drive  
Santa Fe, NM 87508

RE: Scoping comments for the Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project

Mr. Melonas and Mr. Falcon,

Mr. Falcon, you asked me to send my ideas and therefore I address this letter to you and Supervisor Melonas.

As a WUI resident of Cañada de los Alamos I would request you accept my comments as part of the public record regarding the Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project.

I ask that you to carefully review the current studies from world-renown, dedicated and respected scientists (listed below), some from your own organization. Any decisions made for any project, of any size, at this point in time should consider and include the information shared by these learned people, and should be considered in an EIS.

But frankly, for me, after reviewing the scoping document, attending meetings, and hiking through other prescription areas in the Santa Fe National Forest for many years, I am firmly and completely against any semblance of thinning and burning currently exemplified.

As a biologist, I see no improvement in habitat, diversity, or resiliency of the forest in these areas. On the contrary, I see the opposite. And I see decades needed to generate even a moderate recovery of health. Combined with the run-away-freight train of climate chaos we have no wiggle room to play the odds. A management plan gone bad will certainly reduce our ability to insulate Santa Fe from severe climatic change.

As a living, breathing resident of the community I am physically affected by the 'prescribed' burns, as are many others, including the ones without voices - the animals. This plan to reinitiate fire into our landscape by bombing oxidizing toxicants such as potassium permanganate and ethylene glycol is not only inhumane to the animals and insects in the forest who cannot run from this dastardly 'treatment,' but is creating more ill-will for the Forest Service than you

probably realize. As a medical doctor I would like to state my strong opposition to this practice of all 'prescribed' burning and especially with the use of these toxicants.

I understand it must weigh heavy on the shoulders of the Forest Service that another mega-fire could take lives and property. The blame would surely land on your organization. But, to undertake such drastic, permanent 'treatments' as you are proposing in response to fear reminds me of my clients who are terrified their animal might catch a contagion, and then fool-heartedly agree to toxic, invasive procedures only to have more illness and often more expense.

Mr. Falcon, you asked for ideas and I submit these comments and scientific studies as the backbone of those ideas. I eagerly welcome the opportunity to discuss specific projects to improve the health of the forest and include the community of Santa Fe - the children, the artists, the elderly, the WUI residents, the urban slickers, the environmental groups, the farmers, and everyone else in between.

These troubling times call for bold, daring and innovative solutions. It seems to me it is the time to think, cooperate, and function *like* a forest. I realize the Forest Service is mandated by higher-ups; but if the Forest Service could undertake a brave, new approach I guarantee there will be the widest and deepest support for a change in consciousness and methodology. Anything short of a new way of relating will meet with opposition, frustration and frankly the further demise of our climate and community. Essentially, a zero-sum game.

If you are interested in truly finding a 'common ground,' and not just an inculcation of the public, please know that I, along with many others, are interested in thinking and working *like* a forest, *with* you, *with* Nature, but not against her.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dee Blanco, DVM  
Cañada de los Alamos

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## FIRE SCIENCE

**Dr. Jack Cohen**, USFS Fire Specialist, retired

*How risk management can prevent future wildfire disaster in the wildland-urban interface*

<https://www.pnas.org/content/111/2/746>

*Protecting Homes in the Wildlands-Urban Interface*

[https://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pubs\\_other/rmrs\\_2004\\_barkeley\\_y001.pdf](https://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pubs_other/rmrs_2004_barkeley_y001.pdf)

*Home Ignitability in the Wildland-Urban Interface*

[https://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pubs\\_other/rmrs\\_2000\\_cohen\\_j002.pdf](https://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pubs_other/rmrs_2000_cohen_j002.pdf)

**Dr. Jennifer Balch**

*Human-ignited wildfires expand the fire niche across the United States* [https://](https://www.pnas.org/content/114/11/2946)

[www.pnas.org/content/114/11/2946](https://www.pnas.org/content/114/11/2946)[https://](https://www.pnas.org/content/114/11/2946)

**Dr. W. C. Bessie, Dr. E. A. Johnson**

*The Relative Importance of Fuels and Weather on Fire Behavior in Subalpine Forests*

[https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/](https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/c4e1/5cb29dc3b2a89c24f302564c01346d306b49.pdf)

[c4e1/5cb29dc3b2a89c24f302564c01346d306b49.pdf](https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/c4e1/5cb29dc3b2a89c24f302564c01346d306b49.pdf)

**Dr. Max Moritz, et al**

*Learning to Coexist With Wildfire*

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267778667_Learning_to_coexist_with_wildfire)

[267778667\\_Learning\\_to\\_coexist\\_with\\_wildfire](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267778667_Learning_to_coexist_with_wildfire)

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## FOREST ECOLOGY

**Dr. Suzanne Simard**

*Mother Trees and connections between trees*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-8SORM4dYG8>

**Dr. Chad Hansen**

*Common Myths about Forests and Fire*

[https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/219122_1da801668a894c9db9f827d9f86f953b.pdf)

[219122\\_1da801668a894c9db9f827d9f86f953b.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/219122_1da801668a894c9db9f827d9f86f953b.pdf)

*The Ecological Importance of Mixed-Severity Fires*

<http://johnmuirproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/BookFlyer.pdf>

**Dr. Diana L. Six**

Management for Mountain Pine Beetle Outbreak Suppression: Does Relevant Science Support Current Policy?

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259714120\\_Management\\_for\\_Mountain\\_Pine\\_Beetle\\_Outbreak\\_Suppression\\_Does\\_Relevant\\_Science\\_Support\\_Current\\_Policy](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259714120_Management_for_Mountain_Pine_Beetle_Outbreak_Suppression_Does_Relevant_Science_Support_Current_Policy)

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**PLANT COGNITIVE ECOLOGY**

**Dr. Monica Gagliano**

Plants learn and remember: let's get used to it.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00442-017-4029-7>

**Dr. Tania Schoennagel**

Adapt to more wildfire in western North American forest as climate change

<https://www.pnas.org/content/114/18/4582>

The interaction of fire, fuels, and climate across Rocky Mountain forests.

<https://academic.oup.com/bioscience/article/54/7/661/223530>

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**CLIMATE CHANGE**

**Climate and Land Use Alliance**

40 scientists from around the world as signatories

5 Reasons The Earth's Climate Depends on Forest

<http://www.climateandlandusealliance.org/scientists-statement/>

**Dr. Dominick DellaSala**

Facts About California Forests, Wildfires, and Carbon

Whole Community Adaptation

<https://www.climatewise.org/>

**The United Nations**

<https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/climate-change/>

**Dr. Beverly E. Law**

Land Use Strategies to Mitigate Climate Change in Carbon Dense Temperate Forests

<https://www.pnas.org/content/115/14/3663>

**Dr. Stephen R. Mitchell, et al**

*Forest fuel reduction alters fire severity and long-term carbon storage in three Pacific Northwestern ecosystems*

<https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1890/08-0501.1>

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**WILDLIFE**

**Robert L. Beschta, et al**

*Adapting to Climate Change on Western Public Lands: Addressing the Ecological Effects of Domestic, Wild, and Feral Ungulates*

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23151970>