

Date submitted (Mountain Standard Time): 7/8/2019 12:00:00 AM
First name: Patrick
Last name: Cox
Organization:
Title:
Comments:
Letter is attached

July 6, 2019
Mr. James Melonas
Forest Supervisor
Santa Fe National Forest
11 Forest Drive
Santa Fe, NM, 87508

Dear Mr. Melonas

Re: Comments on the Scoping of Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project

We are writing to add our comments on the Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project. We do support the Forest Service and its goal to institute good land management practices here in Santa Fe.

Little information has been provided about the project, so these comments are at a general level. Once further project information is developed and made available to the community, we can be specific in our comments.

Decision making: This project represents a significant undertaking and will have lasting impact on the community. The project scoping should include how the decision making process will be conducted to ensure that high quality decisions are made for the project. The failure of many projects can be traced back to bad decisions: either the decision was framed poorly, or based on inaccurate information, or excluded important decision drivers. Having a rigorous process for making decisions is critical for the project's success and should be laid out early in scoping documents.*

Risk assessment: Next to a good decision making process a strong risk assessment and management process should be part of the project scoping. The process should be transparent so that community members can see what risks the project team is focused on and how they are mitigating them.

Environmental impact: We believe strongly that the Landscape Resiliency Project is on the edge of our understanding of the best practices for wild land management. New information is becoming available on the long-term impact that forest clearing and burning practices have on wildlife and global CO2 levels. We are not expecting that the Forest Service Project embark on years of study. However key project decisions are being made which will have an environmental impact at some level. The project should identify those decisions and make clear what current science believes the impacts and tradeoffs are.

Rolling scope: The Forest Service has set up the project to run for 10 years. The project planning should take advantage of the rolling nature of the work by gathering data as the work is executed and evaluating key performance parameters at certain timely intervals along the way. Then use that performance data to go back and evaluate the decisions made in the original project plan to determine if any changes are warranted.

We recognize the good faith efforts the Forest Service is making to not only manage the forest resource, but also to involve the community in the project. We believe maintaining a healthy forest is a goal the whole community can get behind if allowed to be involved. We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments to the Forest Service.

*Please see Strategic Decision Group from Stanford University at <https://sdg.com/thought-leadership/decision-quality-defined/>

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