

Thank you for allowing me to comment, however, I do not believe many people are aware of the proposal to burn these large areas in the inner parts of the forest. This is alarming in itself.

I'm a longtime Santa Fean, I have a B.S. in Biology, I am a parent, and an advocate of our environment we ALL share. I have witnessed the destruction of many natural lands and water under the pretense that *man knows better*.

I, like others, request that the Forest Service provide an in depth Environmental Impact Statement. The public has been insufficiently included in the planning stages. I only found out about this large burn proposed just in the last week (10/1/2021). These are public lands that we as citizens are all a part of. Why aren't more people aware of this? How can communities that have limited resources and time be able to access this information and be able to have the time to comment? It begs the question of the intent of the outreach by the Forest service.

The US Forest Service will tell you prescribed burns are for the safety of man and it helps the environment - this is what the public has been told for years. Unfortunately, this year were some of the worst forest fires in the US. It's not working. If someone would come onto your property, and burn it down in the name of helping out the environment, and the people around you, would you think this is a good idea? Or would you think they are mad? Are the animals in the wilderness alerted when their homes will be ignited? Or are they only alerted the moment their children's fur catches fire? But that's the accepted sterile argument we are to believe-- that *man knows better*.

I am opposed to "managing" the forests by "prescribed" burns. The idea of man setting fires in the name of fire prevention has many deceptive names: forest health, and ecological restoration. Interestingly, it is never named: *Respiratory Damage Time* or *Bear and Cub Killing Season*.

Why is the public not informed that dense, mature forests tend to burn less intensely because they have higher canopy cover and more shade, which creates a cooler, more moist microclimate. Dense forests are not the problem, trees are the helpers of the micro climates within the forest. The higher density of trees of all sizes can act as a windbreak, buffering gust-driven flames. Thinning and prescribed burns that remove trees, especially mature trees, reverse those effects, creating hotter, drier, and windier conditions. And, contrary to what many elected officials have portrayed, dead trees and downed logs (from drought or previous fire), which soak up and retain large amounts of water, do not increase fire intensity in subsequent burns.

"What does stop fires from burning down homes and buildings is "home hardening" techniques like installing a fine wire mesh over exterior vents to prevent flaming embers from being blown into a structure and rain gutter guards to prevent dry leaves and needles from accumulating next to the roof. Creating a 100-foot perimeter of "defensible space" by removing lower limbs, dry grasses, dead needles, and leaves can deny a wildfire a path to a house." - Chad Hanson: *Smokescreen: Debunking Wildfire Myths to Save Our Forests and Our Climate (University Press Kentucky, May 2021)*.

In the Forest Service Manual 2020.5; "Resilience" is an interesting word choice used in the Forest Service Manual 2020.5. Resilience to what? Man's repeated burning of our forests? Or is nature the enemy that must be burned to be able to be controlled? It's 2021- let us not operate on old information. Let us not repeat the past environmental damage caused by man's "management" of the environment. It's not working.