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MAY 16 2022

Stevensville Ranger District

M. J. Edwards

Rodger + Patricia Miller

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

Stevensville Ranger Station

Darby, Montana

attn Steve Brown.

I am replying in response to the preliminary proposals for the Bitterroot Front Project. I would like to receive more detailed project proposals as they become available in the future.

No clearcuts; clearcuts should be excluded from the project. Seed tree cuts are clearcuts under a different name. Shelterwood cuts may have elements of the clearcut within them and this outcome should be forestalled. Shelterwood cuts can be done well with elements of fuel reduction and with the protection and preservation of all old growth trees. We read a proposal, in the Bitterroot Star newspaper, that trees 12" or more in diameter should be considered old growth. We support this proposal.

Page 9 of the Bitterroot Front Project proposal states
"this proposal does not include any road construction
or reconstruction in inventoried roadless areas."

The above statement is contradicted on page 10 when
it is shown, and stated, that "commercial timber harvest
within inventoried roadless areas" of 13245 acres
are "potential". No roads in roadless areas.

We would like to see the project removed
from any activity in the Trapper Creek area. This
scenic area, with spectacular views of Trapper Peak
should be left untouched.

The Bitterroot Front is distinct in beauty.
This is an area in transformation, as population grows.
Due to its unique beauty, and closeness to a growing
population, the work done through Forest Service oversight
should be of a delicate nature. This is not a backwater
forest in an area of no great distinction that can be
roughly treated.

Some previously managed National Forest acreage in the Bitterroot have been over logged and poorly processed.

There are areas where few trees, often of similar size are left relatively equidistant from one another and widely spaced. This makes the ^{once} forested landscape look plucked and not at all like a forest. It also increases the rate of water evaporation and fire potential.

Forester oversight of worked areas should be rigorously given to see that all work is done in the highest quality; stumps are cut to proper size and that trees are not inappropriately logged.

I would like to see the Project comment period be extended to past 4th of July. Seasonal residents should not be excluded from the comment process because the dating of the Project proposal, in the newspaper of record, the Ravalli Republic, was during their seasonal absence. They may in all likelihood be unaware of the proposal. Extend the public comment period to include seasonal residents who contribute to and have a great stake in this Project.

Thank You, Rodger F. Miller and Patricia C. Miller