



Friends of the Lower Blue River

March 29, 2024

District Ranger Adam Bianchi
680 Blue River Parkway
PO Box 620
Silverthorne, CO 80498

Dear District Ranger Bianchi,

Friends of the Lower Blue River (FOLBR) has a high degree of interest in protecting and fostering the environmental health in the Lower Blue River Valley. Forest health and resiliency are high priorities in the face of climate change. We have examined the Notice of Proposal for the Lakeview project and discussed your team's presentation at our March 26th Board Meeting.

The basic premise for the project in the face of climate change has ecological reasoning behind it. Though we do have concerns that warrant caution and a strenuous Environmental Impact Assessment. Here are our concerns we would like the USFS to focus on in its NEPA process.

Weeds

The NOPA states invasive weeds will be monitored and treated. More specific information would be helpful. There needs to be money budgeted for this purpose. We are fortunate to have numerous nonprofits with hundreds of volunteers doing weed eradication on Forest Service lands in Summit County. But we are overwhelmed with the current tasks and constant regrowth of invasive weeds. We are concerned this project will create more acres of weeds if not treated properly.

Wildlife

The combination of project length, size of acreage and human and machine intrusiveness in nature will negatively impact numerous species. How will wildlife be protected? The noise and its impact on stress and health is something to consider. This is a shared community value we consider a high priority.

Roadways

The extent of roadway usage including current, new and recommissioned roads appears extensive and potentially injurious to the landscape. Even with optimal construction methodologies for hydrology, we feel there should be an "error" budget built into the project. Much can go wrong with unforeseen issues caused by transportation assets.

Carbon

We encourage the USFS to develop a qualitative carbon model collaboratively with interested organizations, like FOLBR, that is easy for the community to understand regarding vegetative treatments proposed. This is particularly important regarding age diversification initiatives. We recommend using this scoping period to develop the basic model.

Sincerely and on behalf of the FOLBR Board of Directors,

Jonathan Knopf
Executive Director
Friends of the Lower Blue River

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Friends of the Lower Blue River
PO Box 2191
Silverthorne, CO 80498