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First name: Jeremy

Last name: Johnson

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Buckskin Saddle Integrated Restoration Project comment

Hello Michelle,

Please see the attached letter for a summary of my comments concerning the project. Feel free to reach out to me if you need any additional information.

Thank you,

Jeremy R Johnson

Dear Michelle Norton,

I wanted to take a moment and provide comments regarding the proposed Buckskin Saddle Integrated Restoration Project. My family has owned property at _____ for over 50 years and has a vested interest in the welfare of the surrounding forests. I spend countless hours in this area hiking, hunting, and exploring. I am in favor of the proposed project and the areas of the project specific to enhancing forest health and wildlife habitat, reducing fuels for forest fires, and improving roads and trails.

As a hunter and outdoorsman, I spend countless hours year-round in the national forest lands which are included in this project. In my time afield over the years I've seen the forest become thicker and the underbrush has been choked out in many areas. Several trees that are dead due to disease or insect infestation are scattered throughout the forest. There are very few open areas which allow wild grasses and forage to grow which support deer and elk survival. The forests need to be thinned and managed in a way that increase the overall health of the entire ecosystem.

Another observation that I have made in the forest is the abundance of fuel which litters the forest floor. I personally witnessed the damage of the wind storm in November 2017. I was at my property deer hunting that week and saw the stark contrast before and after the storm. The wind storm left countless trees blown over and littered across the forest. These trees added to the already substantial amount of other fuel which has been piling up for years. This added fuel has put the forest and private property at a higher risk for a devastating fire. Our cabin is in desperate need of improvements which would raise our property value. Due to the increased risk of forest fire, I am hesitant to make these improvements. Moving forward with this proposed plan would be a step in the right direction to reduce the risk of a fire.

Due to the increased risk of a forest fire, the residents of Kilroy Bay and Pine Cove have developed their own volunteer fire department (<https://www.kilroypinecovefd.com>). This was spurred by a fire which started behind a resident's cabin in 2016. A couple of residents were able to extinguish the fire with the few resources available at the time. The fire department was called but it was going to take them 3+ hours to arrive on the scene. Part of the delay was due to the condition of the roads and access to this area via NFS Road 2711. The lesson learned from this experience was that any fire in our area needed to be handled by the residents because the road conditions are so terrible that outside resources will never make it to the scene in time. For this reason, I believe that this project should move forward with an immediate emphasis on improving road conditions for egress and ingress of resources to combat the current fire danger. Improved roads will also provide the access needed for the rest of

the project to move forward efficiently.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the proposed project. Idaho forests and residents deserve a management program which protects our natural resources.

Sincerely,

Jeremy R Johnson