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Dear Ranger Wong, selected IDT members and selected forest staff,

Since I retired from the USFS the agency has gone downhill. They used to spend most of their budget on things the public wanted on their national forests. This included:

*finding and fixing resources in the forest that are not functioning properly,
*determining why they are not functioning properly and assure the situation will not occur again if it was caused by past management treatments,
*not creating large openings in the forest (clearcuts),
*never do anything that would spoil the scenery,

Yes, there was a time when line-officers really listened to the public and did not implement treatments the majority of the recreating public did not want.

Ranger Wong, the P&N at page 1-5 of your draft EA tells the public "Action is urgently needed to reduce hazardous fuels."

One can always depend on having to deal with witless USFS employees who swallow everything the USFS comes up with to serve their corporate masters. These same people have convinced themselves they are serving the public.

These employees don't think. They are sure the agency would not harm the forests they are paid to protect so why question it. For several decades there has been information available authored by expert scientists with Ph.D.s that shows the USFS's latest excuse to log and road-up land owned by 340 million Americans (commercial timber sales to remove hazardous fuels) is useless. See Opposing Views Attachment #25.

Some USFS employees will read the science in the attachment and reject it out of hand. They already know current USFS actions are inconsistent with "best science." They know if they allowed this independent science to guide them they would soon be at odds with their supervisors.

Yes, this is the current USFS … bending over backwards to provide profit-making opportunities for resource extraction corporations.

The most recent USFS excuse to log and road-up healthy forests is commercially removing hazardous fuels to mitigate wildfire behavior. As I said before the experts with no connection to the USFS are ignored.

A book has been published that reflects this change in the agency.

A Burning Issue. A Case for Abolishing the U.S. Forest Service
By: Robert H. Nelson
Published by Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000

Reviewed by Ronald N. Johnson, Montana State University
https://www.independent.org/publications/tir/article.asp?id=170

Excerpts:

"A theology of timber management existed that called for almost complete protection of timber from the ravages of fire. The culture of the Forest Service from its early days exhibited a strong conviction of doing God's work in the world, a moral righteousness that was embroidered with scientific technology. This conviction led to numerous and costly policy decisions because basic economic principles, such as time discounting, were ignored. As the title of his book suggests, however, Nelson believes a failed fire policy is most responsible for the agency's current dilemma. "The leading policy issue today on the national forest system-issues that demonstrate the inability of the current Forest Service to deal with the basic problems of the national forests-revolve around forest fire and its ecological consequences" " (p. 10).

"Although both sides claim that forest policy should be based on scientific principles, Nelson argues compellingly that much of the debate is grounded in religion rather than in science."

"In A burning Issue, Robert Nelson argues that the U.S. Forest Service is demoralized within and besieged from without by a wide array of interest groups. He attributes this sorry state of affairs to the Forest Service's inability to define its mission in a time of rapidly changing values in American society. His solution to this predicament is to abolish the agency."

"Although I concur with Nelson's recommendation to abolish the Forest Service, I think it is an unlikely outcome, and his intermediate or short-run proposal offers only limited benefits. Nevertheless, his book should be required reading for all students of government, not only those concerned with Forest Service policy, because it provides an excellent source in any attempt to understand the consequences of allowing a governmental agency to become so buffeted by competing pressure groups that it loses direction and becomes an even more costly entity."

None of you like what you have just read. You aren't sure how to deal with it. A few of you are angry. These experts have shown how commercial fuels logging is an expensive, ineffective venture. I'm sorry but most of you will continue to believe what the USFS tells you. You are trying to think of a reason why the USFS would ignore the science and teach thousands of employees logging in the right places will reduce the spread and intensity of wildfires. The answer is shown below:

Volume

Some of you knew this but would not let the issue rise to the surface because of your fear. Of course there are other USFS claims that are untrue. Do yourself a favor and be on the lookout for them.

Your career will be much more rewarding and pleasant if you know your work isn't being used to trick the people who provide the money for your salary into believing things that are not true.