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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to express my unambiguous objection to the project. I ask the USFS not to move forward with this project and instead to revisit the planned action and its potential impacts on the project area, on recreation and recreational access, on the surrounding community, and on the environment.

My specific objections reflect my submitted public comments on 8/25/2023 and 10/19/2023 and are as follows:

The USFS has failed to properly evaluate potential impacts on scenery, impacts of noise, road construction and logging activities.

As I wrote on 10/19/2023:

I was crushed to learn of the pending Forest Service project (#57392), threatening the visual beauty, the plants and wildlife, and the quiet peacefulness of this place for up to ten years. Justifications for this project (namely "timber products") will not benefit this landscape now-or for many years after the project is over, the forest stripped of "6 million board feet" worth of its trees. My understanding is that there is a strong likelihood that the economic benefit of these timber products may never even be felt by the local community.

I am concerned that this project will severely diminish this beautiful recreation space for decades, spoiling this sanctuary for multiple generations of visitors and-worse-removing habitats and food sources for the wildlife that has inhabited these forests for centuries.

Rather than allay my concerns, the Final Environmental Assessment and Draft Decision Notice further demonstrates the USFS failure to meaningfully consider the impacts of the proposed action on scenery; the impacts of noise from construction and logging activities on recreational users and the surrounding community; and the overall impact of the proposed action on recreational use of the plan area.

The USFS has failed to properly evaluate impacts on recreation and on the surrounding community.

As I stated in my public comment on 10/19/2023:

I have read the draft Environmental Assessment, and it is woefully lacking in detail about the impact of this project on the trails, the landscape, and the community. The plan, it has been stated, may take just two years or may take ten. How can the local community and forest visitors sign off on a project, knowing it may take as many as ten years?

It is particularly upsetting that the Forest Service dropped its recreation management plan from the assessment, as I believe recreation will be severely impacted by the proposed action. I am also very concerned about the safety and quality of life impacts of hauling operations on the surrounding communities as well as on the forest.

The Final Environmental Assessment and Draft Decision Notice fail to address these concerns. The USFS should conduct a more thorough and detailed analysis (or any meaningful analysis at all) on the impacts of the proposed action on recreation in the area.

The USFS fails to justify the decision to engage in this logging operation; the USFS has failed to explore reasonable alternatives.

As I stated in my 10/19/2023 public comment:

I am concerned that environmental rationale for the project is not primary-and should be-and that alternative measures to address things like diseased trees have not been documented and detailed for public consideration.

The USFS should conduct a thorough analysis of reasonable alternatives, including no action, and present those alternatives to the public for consideration.

Sincerely, Alison L. Ruch