

May 5, 2020

USDA Forest Service, Region 2  
Rocky Mountain Region  
Attn: Objection Reviewing Officer  
P.O. Box 18980  
Golden, CO 80402  
To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to express my objection to the Modified FEIS for the Medicine Bow Forest regarding the Landscape Vegetation Analysis Project, or LaVA. Most importantly the USFS has consistently violated the NEPA process, the reason for this modified document.

In addition, the plan is inherently flawed because it calls for logging and clear-cutting 95,000 acres of the Medicine Bow forest. Although the forest has had disruption by beetle kill, these trees are no longer of value. Timber companies will only be interested in areas where there are more live trees. Unfortunately, we live in a time of climate change, and studies have shown that these forests will not regenerate due to increased lack of moisture from over-story loss due to timber harvest and to climate change. Studies indicated that forests will not regenerate after wildfires, and the inference is that forests will also not regenerate after a prescribed burn.

"Evidence for declining forest resilience to wildfires under climate change." CS Stevens-Rumann, KB Kemp, PE Higuera, BJ Harvey, MT Rother, *Ecology Letters*, February, 2018.

I believe it is unconscionable that the forest service would open this discussion now in the middle of a pandemic. Folks are focused on staying alive and keeping their livelihood. I suspect that the inference is to use these facts to push the project through before folks have had an opportunity to focus on this additional loss to their lives that has been proposed by the Forest Service. Asking folks to attend an objection meeting now is asking them to possibly sacrifice their lives in order to stand up for what they believe is wrong.

The Medicine Bow forest is the most visited forest in the state of Wyoming, and provides economic value to the surrounding communities through visitation. However, to me, the most important value of the Medicine Bow is its inherent intrinsic value to all who visit. John Muir may have said it best, "Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees, ... while cares will drop away ... like the leaves of Autumn."

— John Muir, The Mountains of California

Joy Keown

Joy Keown  
Retired Science Teacher

