Linda Dworak

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(406)218-9510

 June 9, 2021

Stephen Brown, District Ranger

Stevensville Ranger District, Bitterroot National Forest

Attn: **Eastside Forest & Habitat Improvement Project**

88 Main Street

Stevensville, MT 59870

Dear Ranger Brown:

I request a meeting for the Forest Service and CSKT to share information about this project with the public in the Bitterroot Valley. Please provide a meeting rather than an open house. Allow this in-person discussion prior to determining NEPA process.

The four-page mailing dated May 11, 2021 is too vague and general for me to be able to provide specific comment. The landscape is vast and varied, including previous burns, Wilderness Study Area, Roadless area, old growth, threatened / endangered / and sensitive plant and animal species. As such, I believe this project deserves a more informed public process. Therefore, while work in the forest may be needed, I must oppose the project at this time.

Given the extent of this project, I suggest it be broken into segments. This allows for localized evaluation of an area based on characteristics of the area, rather than having to make sweeping comments for the entire east side. Perhaps segments coinciding with watersheds would give a functional perspective of connectivity and adjacent land uses.

I know people would be thrilled to have the chance to hear about the project from you and the tribes directly and to have the chance to contribute and ask questions for clarification.

Although budget and personnel may be limited, the area is too important to too many to bypass meaningful direct engagement. I would be pleased to assist with locations for these meetings if that would be helpful to you. And I know local community groups would be willing to provide refreshment.

Please let me know when you are available to speak. You can contact me at (406)218-9510.

Sincerely,

Linda Dworak