

From: Todd Brockman
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To: Sierra National Forest Supervisors Office
Attention: Creek Fire Project Comments
1600 Tollhouse Road
Clovis, CA 93611

RE: Creek Fire Restoration Project #60422

Date: March 18, 2022

Dean,

I have reviewed the Creek Fire Project Scoping Letter. I just have some general comments after reading the entire scoping letter. I look forward to future discussions with you and your staff as the project progresses.

A concern is that the Forest will create extra roads then shut those roads down versus turning them over to OHV/OSV after the project. These additional roads should be turned over and maintained by the OHV/OSV groups as they could lead to better Fire Management in the future and more recreation opportunities for the ever-growing OHV/OSV user groups. Secondly, the Creek Fire footprint restoration project should not decrease recreation opportunities; if anything, the Forest should increase ALL recreational opportunities for all User Groups. Lastly, any new roads that are created should not abut directly up against existing Wilderness Boundaries, and a minimum buffer zone is maintained to prevent wilderness area OHV incursions.

In areas of reforestation, proper tree spacing is used to prevent a repeat of the Creek Fire high-intensity burning, and care is taken to create a fire-resistant habitat with the proper use of prescribed fire and other methods. Preference should be given to local timber companies that can salvage log the standing dead trees.

There is concern that invasive species such as Ceanothus and Invasive Thistle(s) will establish themselves due to lack of resources and more significant priorities in a post Fire Restoration Environment.

Hazard Tree(s) mitigation around; (1) public recreation facilities, (2) stock trails, (3) stock driveways, (4) wilderness trailheads access roads, (5) campsites, (6) OHV Roads, (7) Public Roads, (8) residential and permit holders access infrastructure need to be given the highest priority, so not to cause closures preventing recreation access for all public user groups. Hazard Tree Mitigation at Administrative sites, wildland-urban interface zones, natural firebreaks should not take priority over Hazard Tree Mitigation of Public Recreation items 1 thru 8 above, where possible.

Road and Trail Improvements for Watershed Protection should not shut down existing access. If it is deemed necessary to shut down access, access to hikers, Mountain Bikers, and Equestrian users should be maintained.

Prescribed fire is used as much as possible to mitigate future Creek Fire Incidents. Prescribed Fire should be used in place of mechanized treatments wherever and whenever possible. It is important to bring fire back to the landscape in a low controlled intensity and natural way to promote a healthy Forest.

During the execution of work, a desire is that Forest will use its volunteer(s) and volunteer partners in addition to local commercial private contractor(s) to accomplish project goals and objectives.

Very truly yours,

Todd Brockman
President, Wilderness Corps