

May 18th, 2022

Bitterroot National Forest

Stevensville Ranger District Front Desk

88 Main Street, Stevensville, MT 59870

RE: Bitterroot Front Project Scoping Projects

Dear Mr. Brown,

I thank you for your efforts to address an issue that can look different to all citizens of Ravalli County. The Bitterroot Front Project appears as though it will attempt to mitigate severe wildfire activity while protecting life and property. Similar to the Roaring Lion fire of 2017, I too, have experienced first-hand what wildfire can do to a community as a result of the Thomas Fire that started on December 4th, 2017. In my former community alone, the fire destroyed over 500 homes and displaced many residents. Furthermore, I served as a utility planner at the time for the local electric company charged with helping the fire victims rebuild and re-establish electrical service to their partly destroyed or newly rebuilt homes. In other areas of the country, the landscape shows the obvious effects of severe drought. One thing to note is that the entire planet is in a state of drought. Ravalli County is no different and will continually be at risk of severe wildfire unless the community begins the collaborative effort to minimize fire danger while preserving the historic beauty of the forest for all visitors to the outdoors. I am supportive of the project as a collaborative and comprehensive effort to address the effects of climate change as it pertains to forest management. Please consider this comment letter as part of the official record for the Bitterroot Front Project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jim Osborne".

Jim Osborne

Ravalli County Planner