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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Forsythe II Plan

Hello,

Having read the documents at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd487569.pdf>
http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd487569.pdf and
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd487567.pdf>
http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd487567.pdf I'd like to make some comments.

I have to say that there isn't much in the way of a substantive difference between this plan and the September plan. That is disappointing and leads me to believe that the comments of those who live here are read, but not truly acted on.

Here are some of my comments and objections:

First, I want you to know that I fully support the MFG alternate plan and much prefer it to the USFS scoping plan. The USFS plan fails the human and animal residents as well as the natural environment itself.

Though I've only been a resident of this area for the last 14 months I treasure the scenic beauty and quiet that currently exists. Literally every day I walk in this magnificent mountain environment. To add an egress road from Big Springs to Magnolia will initiate further degradation of this environment.

In terms of fire mitigation, the latest science indicates that thinning in this area, at this elevation, which contains our vegetation type, will have no benefit. The open forests and low frequency fire regime referenced by the USFS applies to elevations 7000 feet and lower. Our area of higher elevation and steeper slopes is not comparable--our fires are more dependent on weather--wind, heat, drought--than fuels. Our widely spaced trees, even the aspen stands, will burn in our upper montane zone with crown fires, if the weather is right. Our upper montane zone vegetation type is Lodgepole, mixed conifer, and Ponderosa, along with many shrubs--this is what makes up type of vegetation found in the Forsythe units.

The USFS 'forest restoration' should not include converting an upper montane zone into a lower montane zone. This process would be contrary to our actual vegetation type, terrain, and weather patterns--by no means a restoration.

Slash needs to be removed and NO MORE slash produced until the backlog is burnt or otherwise dealt with. It is common sense that removing the cover story and putting it on the ground in slash piles does nothing to decrease fire hazard. Producing more slash piles than can be dealt with in a year contradicts the objective. Leaving 2 6'x6' piles per acre is too much. We already have more slash piles than can be taken care of in the next several years. Please see these articles--<http://www.skyhidailynews.com/article/20100614/NEWS/100619985>, and
<<http://www.containedburn.com/Products.php>> <http://www.containedburn.com/Products.php>

The proposal should be in accordance with the Arapahoe Roosevelt Forest Plan! This means more importance on scenic and social values, wildlife habitat, as well as preserving future old growth. No trees 12" or over should be cut.

There is no mention of the Gross Reservoir expansion. Its impact must be considered. The 2014 Final EIS for the proposed expansion is a major change of circumstances and impact on the area. No matter the amount of money Denver Water has contributed, there has been no science to prove that cutting the trees does more for preserving the watershed than the occasional fire.

It's time that ecological, environmental, and social factors become the primary determinants of the action that will be taken. The proposed plan misses the mark on all these levels.

In Health,
Dr. Pais

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