

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/19/2016 9:15:20 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Forsythe II project

To Whom it may concern.

We do not support the USFS Forsythe II proposal. We support the Magnolia Forest Group's Alternate Plan. The following letter supports our view.

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To the USFS with regards to the Forsythe 2 Project,

Once again the USFS has presented a plan with long term consequences for the environment with a great lack of credibility behind it. This plan is following the same philosophy of "shoot first and ask questions later". Is this how you are going to treat our public forests?

Experimenting with the most popular areas of forest, due to their WUI location and accessibility, undermines the purpose of the USFS to provide for a wide range of activities within the National Forests. Recreation takes places here because of the relatively undamaged, and unaltered environment. By implementing the USFS "treatment" plans, the WUI areas west of Boulder covered by the Forsythe 2 plan will no longer be inviting for people who previously used them.

One of the aims of the mitigation in the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest has always been fire mitigation. However analytical studies have shown that the main cause of catastrophic fires have been human activities. The logical response to this is not to change the forest, but to reduce the threat of people burning it down. One solution would be to divert funds from cutting projects to funding more park rangers to patrol and regulate human activities in the National Forest such as camping and shooting.

Most importantly is the question of whether there is a scientific basis for the proposed treatments in the Forsythe 2 plan to begin with. Certainly stating that the wildlife will be studied later when the USFS has already presented a treatment plan for comments is lacking in sound science. Paramount to conceiving any plan of action though is to correctly classify what type of forest is intended to be treated. By misclassifying most of the area in the Forsythe 2 plan (that area west of Gross Reservoir) as "lower montane" as opposed to "upper montane" the USFS has created an entire treatment plan that will fail to meet its objectives because of the difference in forest. This shows complete incompetence, and is one reason why this entire project must be rethought.

The treatment proposed around Gross Reservoir also brings into question whether it is only being proposed due to Denver Water's interest in expanding Gross Reservoir. This project (the Moffat Collection System) would involve removing all of the trees around the reservoir up to the new water line. Interestingly enough the USFS plans would do part of this work. The USFS has also received funds from Denver Water to assist in this

"treatment". Are we truly to believe that this is simply for forest health??

The Forsythe 2 plan is fatally flawed in its scientific basis. It also disregards everything that the community has so far shared during the numerous field trips, meetings, and comments. Though the residents in the area are not the entire public, we too have a valid say what happens to the our forests. Residents always have the best understanding of the immediate environment in which they live. In addition, many residents have undertaken extensive studies of the area, maps, USFS treatment proposals, scientific studies, and historical documentation of the region. So once more we offer our comments in the hope that the USFS may take them seriously. We can not continue to manage our forests based on inaccurate, and incomplete studies!

Please use the MFG alternate plan rather than scoping document released to the public.

thank you,

Dr. Jason Orowitz