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Organization:

Title:

Comments: USFS Forsythe II Project

To whom this does concern,

I do not like the USFS plan for the Forsythe II Project and I am requesting that it be completely replaced with a better plan, such as the one submitted by the Magnolia Forest Group. Some of the reasons for my recommendation are stated below.

1. I am deeply concerned that there is disagreement between the USFS and other authorities on forest environment about the designation of this area's bio-zone, and the large affect that would have on how to best manage the forest in the Forsythe area. No management of this area's forests should be done until there is agreement by all environmental professionals on the true classification of the Magnolia Road area.
2. I am deeply concerned that the USFS has historically not dealt with the slash piles left behind after cutting down trees in the National Forest, which USFS personnel have admitted leaves as much fire danger on the land as there was with all of the trees still standing. Boulder County reportedly has tens of thousands of piles of slash that are many years old still scattered throughout the National Forest, and there seems to be no resources in the USFS to deal with this in a timely way.
3. I am deeply concerned that the USFS does not seem to be aware of and following the most current recommendations from studies of forest fire behavior and the treatments that have been done historically in this area. It is clear by hearing USFS personnel talk about the details of their proposed management plans that these tree-cutting prescriptions are in stark contrast to those recommended for best fire prevention in local forest areas over the last few years.
4. I am at a loss to understand why the USFS did forest-cutting projects in this area 12 to 15 years ago in the name of wild-fire prevention but has no plan now to go back through those areas to thin out the new trees that have regrown and now create perfect ladders for any future ground fires to easily move up into the tree canopies.
5. I am very put off that the USFS seems to have no concern for how their projects negatively effect the aesthetic of the lands so close to peoples' homes and the areas frequented by many citizens for recreational purposes. The work done along the western end of Magnolia Road over the past couple of years is particularly unattractive but must be looked at regularly by those who live in this area and drive along Magnolia Road; those who enjoyed hiking and bicycling along trails in that area now find denuded landscapes and obliterated trails. People exploring this area looking at houses for sale will likely be disappointed with the look of the ragged clear cuts.
6. I am deeply disturbed that the USFS appears to only go through the motions of considering the nearby residents' ideas and concerns about forest management plans. I have heard the USFS personnel say they want input on their plans for forest management but then the plans are routinely implemented with almost none of the changes asked for by local residents. This process is perceived by the public as a sham and leaves many people feeling that they can not influence the actions of the USFS, and that this bureaucracy will do whatever it wants to do, for whatever reasons. This is very bad policy for this day and age - promoting the view that the relationship between a government agency and the local public is adversarial rather than cooperative. It is divisive and dangerous to be so willing to create the sense of powerlessness in the country's citizens.

The above points represent my main objections to the type of treatments the USFS has proposed for the

Magnolia Road area in the Forsythe II plan, but not all of them. I am expecting the USFS to reconsider this poorly designed plan and adopt one that is better suited for the environment of this area, and based on the most current science of wild-fire and animal habitat.

Sincerely,

George Blakey
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