

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/7/2018 4:39:25 PM

First name: Polly

Last name: Pfister

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Service: I OBJECT to this massive deforestation project, which should be dropped entirely. I am a native, lifelong Montanan. I've backpacked into every Montana wilderness area, including Turquoise Lake, thereby experiencing firsthand the incomparable forest ecosystems, wildlife habitat, and wildland beauty that is ONLY found in wilderness and INTACT, UNLOGGED forests.

I also worked for Plum Creek Timber Company for 10 years in the 1980s, as Chief Log Scaler, and have seen countless logging projects as part of that employment. During my long stint in the timber industry, my employer greatly accelerated its logging in the Swan Valley (and many other places) to maximize its profits and to more quickly 'liquidate its assets' - meaning cut down all its timber, as fast as possible. The cumulative result was, and is, massive deforestation of the Swan Valley and destruction of vast forest ecosystems and wildlife habitat there.

This project would continue, and greatly exacerbate, the prior decimation of Swan Valley's forests that all of its wildlife species depend on to flourish. It will also negatively affect Turquoise Lake's surrounding ecosystems, due to proximity alone.

Logging NEVER RESTORES forests. Logging is 100% certain to put sediment into streams, killing fish eggs and ruining fish spawning beds, especially this project's 60 miles of roads (roads ALWAYS create sediment). Logging destroys elk hiding cover. This massive logging project will destroy lynx habitat, sending lynx further down the path of extinction.

Furthermore, recent studies show that logging and thinning INCREASE, not decrease, forest fire intensity and spread, because removal of the trees' shade dries out the forest, leaving it tinder-dry and more fire prone than an intact forest. Logging and thinning also allow winds to blow more forcefully and spread flames far faster than in an intact forest. Increased wind speeds in a thinned forest also cause many (or most) of the remaining trees to blow over, something all of us 'loggers' have seen frequently.

This project subsidizes the timber industry, at great cost to us taxpayers. All Plum Creek employees were repeatedly reminded that no Forest Service timber sales EVER were profitable, that ALL federal timber sales lost money and were ALWAYS subsidized by taxpayers, and that remains true today. Plum Creek always told us, regarding federal timber sales, that taxpayers were footing the bill for our timber jobs. This project is another taxpayer subsidized giveaway to the timber industry, which employs fewer and fewer people due to mechanization of jobs formerly done by us folks, so that corporate profits are maximized at the expense of all of us.

Therefore, this project should be completely abandoned, and the Forest Service should stop pretending that deforestation is restoration.