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First name: Theodore S

Last name: Kardos

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Suggestions for SXwUYTN Project

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Because of the overwhelming threat of catastrophic firestorms, fuel hazard reduction must be the top priority regardless of what activities are promoted or eliminated in the forest ecosystem. This will be necessary until historic range of variability (HRV) is achieved.

Frequent thinnings, pruning and slash disposal, to a low rate of spread and resistance to control, will allow the ecosystem to be prescribed burned in a timely, beneficial and safe manner as the project progresses.

Virtually all the ecosystem is in an immature condition and needs thinning, pruning and slash disposal. Thinning will be helpful only if they are light enough to prevent significant regeneration. Opening stands too rapidly perpetuates the overstocking problem. This is the most common problem we have and fires are burning those stands up as fast as they are being created.

I believe the program's success will depend on having enough on site supervision by silvicultural, fire, and insect and disease control experts. These environmental professionals must also have the responsibility in choosing the appropriate heavy equipment and monitoring their use.

Is there a time frame for completion? Do the Federal and State participants have enough qualified personnel to complete the work within this time? Are there enough available local laborers and facilities to hire itinerant workers?