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Comments: I was surprised to get your letter inviting me to comment on the Greater Red Lodge Area Vegetation and Habitat Destruction Project. I thought you had given up on this ill-conceived project some time ago. It makes no sense to me for USFS to propose to save the ecosystem from potential fire damage by performing activity that guarantees worse destruction. I have talked to my neighbors on Sheep Mountain some of whom live closer to the affected area than I do. They say they are content to accept the risk of the current forest management situation when compared to your proposed alternative. We are opposed to the planned activities which are sure to have a deleterious effect on the entire upper Red Lodge Creek ecosystem.

The recent logging activity in the area by DNRC had bad consequences for me because their road building and soil disturbance caused large amount of silt to be carried into my flood irrigation system which uses the waters of Burnt Fork Creek and west Hogan Creek. This silt was carried down the ditch to my ranch 1.5 miles away and filled many of my ditches level full with silt. It cost me thousands of dollars to have my ditches professionally cleaned.

The only significant fires that I remember in this area in the past 60 years were caused by loggers burning slash at inappropriate times. It seems like a wise choice for USFS to continue the process of selective logging in the area to thin heavy stands, create fire breaks and to further reduce fuel load. This has been the method of management for the past 60 years and it seems to work well.