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Comments: The proposed plan includes too much clearcutting and road building and not enough detail about either. I do not think that clearcutting and replanting such large areas of land will expedite a return to ecological function for a variety of reasons. First, regrowth is already happening and clearcutting would set things back a lot, while increasing erosion and potentially spreading invasive weeds. Obliterating a landscape for the purpose of removing already dead trees doesn't make much sense to me. Second, I highly doubt that a variety of local genotypes can be sourced for replanting efforts. Instead, trees from Colorado, probably of one or few genotypes will be planted on a vast scale. Intraspecific variation in the plant community is critical for maintaining biodiversity at higher trophic levels (see the community genetics literature, studies by Whitham et al. are good examples).Having a mountain range where 30% of the trees are of a few genotypes is a recipe for pest outbreaks in the future, thus undercutting this massive expenditure of public money and setting the forest up to fail again in a few decades.

A more surgical and detailed plan is needed. Do restoration here and there, salvage logging here and there, be careful about road building and removal, etc. Work to increase genotypic diversity of dominant trees, including bringing in genotypes from warmer climes that may be able to handle the expected changes to climate. Such an approach could be done on smaller scales for less expenditure at a time. Monitoring could be put in place to ensure success. Because it would be a more labor intensive approach it could provide good paying jobs for years.

To sum up, aside from the ecological concerns I mentioned, a project on this scale just seems bound to have serious problems, and I am not convinced it is needed in the first place.