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Comments on Modified Final EIS, Medicine Bow Landscape Vegetation Analysis Project

1. We believe that our National Forests should be treated like ecosystems, not crops. Applying management treatments to such a large area over such a short time frame (15 years) in order to try to steer the forest in a desired direction while we are in the midst of a changing climate doesn't seem prudent - there is too much uncertainty. We especially oppose clearcuts on 95,000 acres.

2. We agree with this comment submitted on April 19, 2019 by forest ecologist Dr. Dennis Knight: "Rocky Mountain forests have survived numerous disturbances during the last several thousand years. They are amazingly resilient without human assistance. As the climate continues to change during the 21st century, managing the forest to maintain the maximum species diversity is the best strategy for maintaining the resilient forests that we've come to appreciate during the previous century-for all their values, including the production of wood that can be harvested."

3. We support and highlight these observations from comments submitted April 9, 2019 by fire and forest ecologist Dr. Dan Tinker:
* It is appropriate to remove hazard trees near human settlements, roads, trails and campgrounds, etc.
* Removing canopy and understory trees by harvest and burning will delay recovery and regeneration.
* Understory vegetation is relatively untouched by the bark beetle epidemic.
* Age class, structural and vegetative diversity is already occurring in the absence of treatments.

4. Adaptive management of the proposed actions should take current research into account, yet the MFEIS does not incorporate important information from the recent research publication, "Evidence for declining forest resilience to wildfires under climate change" by CS Stevens-Rumann, KB Kemp, PE Higuera, BJ Harvey, MT Rother, published in Ecology Letters in February, 2018. We know that you are monitoring climatic conditions and we just want to emphasize that it is critical that planning stay attuned to changing climatic conditions.

5. Even if there will not be more than 75 miles of temporary roads open at one time, there are still 600 miles of temporary roads planned which is way too much. We are very concerned that financial and human resources to monitor and close these roads may not be there.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard and Ann Boelter