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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Mid-Swan Project comments

The Swan Valley is nationally significant high quality habitat with an amazing abundance of animals and rare plants, even though it has been so fragmented and checkerboarded. It has been distressing to see how much that has continued to happen over recent decades.

The Mid-Swan Project is yet another attempt to "fix" mother nature, this time on a gigantic scale which plans to close the door on USFS responsibility to listen to citizens' input here for 15 years.

We are dealing with the ill effects of the last big "fix" of trying to eliminate wildfire from the landscape. Which part of our current hubris will future generations curse us for? From what I see, some of it will be for the ineffectiveness of our heavy-handed manipulations to reduce wildfire, and some of it will be for ignoring the understory in our pursuit of trying to control the trees.

The invasion of weeds into treated areas is having a large, long-term impact on our native vegetation, and the only really effective solution I have seen is prevention - keep equipment, traffic, and disturbance out of the area.

Forest thinning projects seem to often end up looking closer to clearcuts, after a few years, because of wind-throw, as we saw just north of here this spring. Notice all those dents in the highway guardrail near Lake Alva from when those magnificent old trees blew down after that area was thinned.

Keep treatments out of designated and recommended wilderness areas.

Reduce road density enough to avoid harming grizzlies, as stipulated in former Forest Plan Amendment 19.

Break this project into smaller pieces so the public can effectively respond to specific locations and designs of timber sales.