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Title:

Comments: I am a 4th generation Washingtonian and a resident of the Methow Valley. I urge the Forest Service to conduct a full EIS, hold additional public meetings, and extend the public commenting period. This project is the largest in Methow Valley Ranger District history and will impact our local forests for generations to come. There has been inadequate time for the local Methow community to review the project and decide if this project is representative of the community goals for our forests.

This plan incredulously strays from the FS's own Restoration Plan by proposing the thinning of trees up to 30" in diameter. Trees of 30" in diameter are already extremely lacking within the proposed project area. Allowing for the thinning of these trees will be extremely detrimental to the short-term and long-term health of these forest ecosystems.

I am also very concerned about the proposed expansion of ATV and mountain bike routes throughout the project zone. Wheeled vehicles (motorized or not) have a large negative impact on the condition of the trail system, increase overall use, and have a detrimental impact on fellow trail users. This section of the proposal should not be included in a restoration plan.

The best available science is clear that increased thinning is less effective than prescribed burning in combatting megafires. Thinning should not occur in old-growth reserves as it is highly unlikely to be beneficial in combatting wildfires. Likewise, salvage logging has been shown to be ineffective treatment in reducing carbon emissions or combating future wildfires. Salvage logging treatments should be removed from this project proposal.

I fully support the comments produced by the Methow Valley Citizens Council and Conservation Northwest.