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Comments: The Bitterroot National Forest (hereafter the Forest) should take a hard look at risk of climate-driven conifer die-off across age classes, and should provide the public with a hard look at what that die-off would mean -- for whatever desired future conditions as defined by a varied assortment of stakeholders. I say this having seen the Forest state that it wants stakeholders to tell the Forest what they want; e.g., asking, "What's your vision?" according to the Bitterroot Star.

The Forest would serve public interest by quoting USDA Secretary Vilsack's April 22, 2022 statement that, "Old-growth forests represent some of the Crown Jewels of our national forest system, and provide important ecosystem services, including playing an essential role in storing carbon, supporting watershed function, and providing wildlife habitat. Unfortunately, climate-driven threats like drought and wildfire are destroying old-growth stands."

Even more unfortunately, climate-driven threats like drought and wildfire are doing no favor to the younger age classes, either.

The materiality of these issues is hard to doubt. As Secretary Vilsack's statement makes pretty clear, there's a lot at stake. And the stakeholders vary, staking out specific issues from across a much wider range of issues, effectively specializing within this or that set of rationales.

So, push stakeholders a bit. Repeat the request for "What's your vision?" Summarize the visions, publish the results as a "what people want report for release to media."

What's my vision?

It's not a vision of what I desire. Instead, it's a vision of what's coming like it or not. It seems to share a key trait with the Forest's own implied vision

What's coming is a retreat of forest cover resulting in conversion from forest to savanna, to shrubland, to grassland, or some combination of the three

To the extent that the Forest will be managing for greater distance between trees, it is now on a path for converting forest to savanna. How well does this pair up with any stakeholder' vision of desired future conditions?