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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Bitterroot Front Project (BFP) Comments

The Forest Service does an excellent job in keeping the public informed on their plans to manage and improve forest conditions, so I am appreciative they have requested more citizen input for the well-chosen and significant Bitterroot Front Project (BFP).

As a long-time resident of Ravalli County, I am very concerned about the safety, well-being, and overall quality of life in the Bitterroot Valley.

Catastrophic events, particularly intense wildfire generates profoundly negative influences on human and wildlife populations, therefore recognizing the critical importance of restoring and maintaining forest health that this project will achieve is vital to the overall welfare of human and wildlife interests.

The BFP judiciously proposes using practicable measures in a manner calculated to foster, promote, and maintain healthy forest conditions for present and future generations of Montanans making it easy to endorse this project.

This project relies on methodical science-based data, coupled with a real time reading of detrimental conditions providing actions necessary to accomplish the cited objectives, central among them reducing fire fuels and other proven treatments that diminish the power of wildfires to save human lives.

While nothing can stop natural indiscriminate ignition sources we should and must initiate more fuel treatments such as this project that provide significant advantages for firefighting, improve forest and human health, and enhance wildlife habitat.

I urge the Forest Service to accelerate the critical active forest management prescriptions and techniques contained in the project as soon as possible and consider allowing temporary personal firewood cutting by local folks prior to implementing the project.

My central position of support is for the meaningful magnitude of restoration, with specific attention on recuperating the landscape towards desired conditions, including appropriate patch sizes, and improved wildlife habitat.

I also wholeheartedly approve of the level of timber harvest proposed (55,000 acres), recognizing the vital role forest products play in achieving local economic goals including increased employment opportunities.

This project is not just important it's crucial for the ecological, economic, and social health of the Forest and surrounding communities in the Bitterroot Valley.

I firmly believe that the benefits of the BFP far outweigh the cost and potential danger of doing nothing.

Regrettably when the Forest service proposes a project to Improve resilience to disturbances and reduce wildfire severity, some NGO opposes the project, or worse litigates, precariously halting it dead in its tracks.

People and animals pay a very high price due to the adverse impacts of raging and destructive wildfires ascribable to these perpetual litigants stopping sensible forest management projects such as this.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my comments in support of this project.