

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/28/2023 1:20:57 AM

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Comments: [External Email]Antelope and Tennant Fire Project

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Dear Project Leader Lisa Bousfield,

Dear Supervisor Smith and Project Leader Bousfield,

I am writing to express my disbelief and outrage upon learning of your recent decision to allow over 20,000 acres of commercial logging and 8 miles of road construction in one of the most biologically fragile and geologically unique areas of California: Medicine Lake Highlands, which has just barely begun to recover after the huge forest fire of 2021.

This proposed project would be another devastating and potentially irreversible blow to the natural forest and wildlife specific to this sensitive area. Post-fire logging does not contribute to the recovery of forest ecosystems. On the contrary, a growing number of noncommercial forest specialists and fire scientists argue that post-fire "salvage" logging further destroys and impedes recovery of a forest.

How can removing the last stands of living, mature trees, after hundreds of thousands have already been killed by wildfire, possibly help protect or regenerate a forest? Where is the science to justify that antiquated practice? Look at the other forests in California that have been devastated by the record-breaking wildfires of the past decade. Many are nothing now but bare hills dotted with the black stumps of dead trees, and the plants taking their place are mostly highly flammable, drought-tolerant shrubs like chamise. California's continued, record-breaking drought and extreme heat are making it almost impossible for new tree seedlings to generate and survive to maturity. Meanwhile, logging interests continue to wipe out what's left of the forests that help cool the planet by providing shade and retaining moisture in the soil, thereby helping to protect against these types of fires.

Your so-called Environmental Assessment does not provide any site-specific information on wildlife, soil, watershed hydrology, archeology, botany or any other obviously vulnerable elements of the targeted ecosystem that will suffer huge impacts from the logging and earth-moving that your project proposes. The location and impacts of indiscriminate, ground-based heavy equipment use in the target area are not quantified, documented or analyzed, and the project does not identify any alternative, less destructive methods to meet its purported goal of protecting the area from future fires.

Please reconsider your ill-conceived plan to allow clear-cutting and the removal of living trees in The Medicine Lake Highlands, and re-open the public comment period when the proposal's surveys, objective reports and analysis are completed. It takes hundreds of years to grow a natural forest; it takes only days to destroy it.

Sincerely,

D. Doering

Sincerely,
Debra Doering
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