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Comments: I live in the Twisp River Valley, and I oppose the Midnight Restoration Project for four reasons. First and foremost, the purported purpose of the project and the means of logging to low density do not align scientifically, morally, or economically. "Selective" logging is extremely disruptive to the ecosystem and does not prevent massive fires or promote forest health. Fire, on the other hand, rejuvenates unhealthy forests. The ecosystems of the Twisp drainage are fire adapted, and recovery from fire is part of the cycle of growth. No forest is adapted to logging, as evidenced by the devastating effects of removing diverse species in favor of monocultures that are neither fire-adapted nor resilient. So much of the watershed has burned (and is recovering quite nicely), that logging what remains makes no sense. The patchwork of forest in various stages of fire recovery is exactly what makes for a healthier ecosystem. The Methow Indians knew this- they set fire to unhealthy stands and let nature do the rest.

Second, the proposal to have private, profit-motivated loggers do the culling is ludicrous. They have zero incentive to leave larger trees or selectively log unhealthy trees. They have only the desire to cut larger, fire resistant trees. I have seen first hand what happens in prescribed logging areas, like the Buttermilk/Black Pine Lake project. Barely a tree or two is left on each acre, and the profit-driven logger claims the trees were all sick. NO ONE can monitor the volume of logging proposed to prevent this sort of fraud and abuse. And once the trees are cut, the landscape is permanently altered. There is no remedy for the abuses of profiteering loggers.

Third, the disruption to the human and animal life of logging is extreme and far outweighs any benefit to the forest. A generation of people who live here will be impacted by the traffic, pollution, and noise, FOR YEARS, without any certainty that the project will improve conditions for future generations. Migratory patterns of animals and species diversity will be permanently altered without any guarantee of benefit to the forest. Far less disruptive logging near where humans live is all that is needed for fire human fire resilience. The forest is capable of taking care of itself if we just let it.

Finally, the project is incredibly expensive. Those resources are better spent managing human activity, like building, in forests, rather than trying to manage the forest. We need to look at the forest with humility and not the arrogance that we can recreate what we did not create. And we need to manage our energy needs in a way that does not endanger boreal forests.