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Organization:

Title:

Comments: As a resident of Twisp, I support the minimal thinning of small diameter trees and returning fire to the landscape via prescribed burning for the Midnight Project. Given the 2021 Cedar Creek Fire and 2018 Crescent Mountain Fire footprints' overlap with this project, I support the site-specific care for these areas that help those forests recover from fire and encourage seedling growth (specifically via non-commercial and non-mechanized treatments). I appreciate and support the FS's proposal to conduct thinning during winter months, which will help minimize soil erosion and disturbance.

While I generally support certain parts of this project, I also have significant concerns about transparency and oversight, especially given what happened with the Mission Project. This last week driving up the West Fork Buttermilk I was completely appalled at both the number of trees taken and the size of trees taken. ****How are you working to ensure that this doesn't happen again with Midnight?*** Leaving the cutting of trees up to the discretion of individual loggers day-of is nonsensical and irresponsible, and I would much rather see tree marking ahead of time by experts who know this project and prescription well and who do not have commercial incentives driving their decision-making. The intent of this project is to build resilience not revenue; it is imperative that this value be front and center through the rest of this process.

Along those lines, I would also much rather see the system set up where any commercial logging is paid as a flat project rate rather than by the tree. This will disincentivize over-logging and better ensure adherence to the prescription, which is vital to the integrity of this project.

Lastly, I have concerns around the OWNF's categorization of small vs large diameter trees within this project, and support ALL large trees over 20" diameter being kept.

Thank you for your consideration and for taking the time to accept public comment on this significant proposal impacting our community.