

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/5/2023 7:39:22 PM

First name: Marina

Last name: Weatherly

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments/Concerns on the Bitterroot Front Project:

- General comment on the process: The website does not include not even minimally detailed information about the project, although it is titled detailed description. (What's allowed, what's not allowed, etc.) No maps. The emergency designation has been placed on several logging projects in Montana. This does not excuse the the USFS from thoughtful and well planned projects with informed, vigorous and timely public input.

- My primary concern is to ensure that NO large diameter and old growth trees are allowed to be cut. We need these larger trees for vital carbon sequestering to slow global warming and future soil amendment and erosion prevention.

- No new roads! The FS has difficulty maintaining the existing roads in our National Forests, and new roads negatively impacts wildlife, weed control and contributes to erosion and motorized overuse in our forests.

- No deforestation near streambeds and watersheds! As a long time irrigator with a head-gate on USFS land, I have felt the impact of previous logging projects that took place upstream from my head-gate. It took years to achieve former water flows and debris mitigation. The watersheds need to retain the existing vegetation along their banks in order to slow the movement of water, and prevent flooding and erosion.

-The public needs assurance that this is not primarily a commercial logging operation in the disguise of a forest management project designed to improve the environment, wildlife habitat and manage wildfire, disease etc.

- With a minimal work force and resources, how does the USFS propose to complete this huge project in such little time?

-A big portion of this project is devoted to mitigating fire danger for homes and structures. Many of the landowners built knowingly near high risk wildfire areas. At what point are the influx of homeowners building near USFS land going to be held responsible for mitigating wildfire or for the county to designate no build zones near USFS lands? We as taxpayers are paying for their decisions to build in high risk areas.