

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/5/2023 2:10:47 PM

First name: David

Last name: Daniels

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Recent events on the Flathead National Forest reveal a lack of impartial decision-making on the part of forest supervisors. I have recreated and hunted in the Swan Valley for over 30 years. I am familiar with the project area. I do not consider the scope of this project to be an emergency that would warrant the restrictions to broader public comments. The Rumbling Owl fuel reduction project represents an illegitimate attempt to exclude public commentary and appeals on a project that affects the people of Montana.

Our system of government was based on the concept of checks and balances. It remains important for courts and citizenry to have oversight on bureaucratic structures such as national forests to prevent abuses and violations of environmental law. The Flathead National Forest has violated the public trust on too many occasions. The recent illegal actions on the part of the Flathead National Forest with regards to the Holland Lake Lodge is a prime example.

I agree that there should be some fuel reduction in the areas identified within the Rumbling Owl Project. However, the presentation of this project again illustrates the illegitimate abuse of power by forest supervisors. The primary beneficiaries of this project are the handful of wealthy part-time residents owning large tracts near the project and sawmill owners. I can suggest a multitude of alternative areas where fuel reduction would have a more practical effect of saving communities and preserving resources. The Rumbling Owl Project simply does not pass the "smell test" for best forestry practices.