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Comments: I am writing as a-

- former resident of Tulare County, California,

_ lawyer (1979 JD, University of Utah College of Law)

- Utah Republican Precinct Chair (SLC074),

- biologist (BS Biology 1977, University of Utah, magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, Utah Secondary Teaching Certificate),

- member of Union of Concerned Scientists, and

- member of Patriotic Millionaires.

The U.S. Forest Service has announced a massive burning project for the Sequoia and Sierra National Forests in California that covers 2.4 million acres - including all 842,448 acres of Wildernesses in both national forests!

The burning proposal covers the entirety of both national forests-3,750 square miles in all.

I urge the Forest Service to spare the designated Wilderness areas there from this extensive burning and habitat manipulation project.

The so-called "Sequoia and Sierra National Forests Prescribed Fire Project" is out for "scoping" now.

This is the first step of the environmental review process.

The Forest Service has announced that all Wildernesses on these two national forests - over 842,000 acres of Wilderness in total - are subject to the proposed burn plan.

Some of America's most loved Wilderness areas are at stake, including:

- Ansel Adams,

- Dinkey Lakes,

- John Muir,

- Kaiser,

- Kiavah,

- Monarch,
- South Sierra,
- Dome Land,
- Jennie Lakes, and
- Golden Trout Wildernesses.

Fire has played, and continues to play, an important ecological role in these Wildernesses.

However, the Forest Service proposal represents a huge human-driven manipulation of Wilderness that is inconsistent with the letter and spirit of the 1964 Wilderness Act.

From a wilderness perspective, it is far better to allow natural, lightning-caused fire to play its role.

It is misguided and ill-advised to

- invade Wilderness to cut down "undesirable" trees, and
- burn forests based on human wishes and desires.

The Forest Service must spare these crown jewels of the National Wilderness Preservation System

The Forest Service should exclude all of the designated Wildernesses from its proposed burning plans for the Sequoia and Sierra National Forests in order to comply with the Wilderness Act.

The agency should instead allow natural, lightning-caused fire to play its ecological role in Wilderness on the Sequoia and Sierra National Forests.