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Comments: As stated in the 1964 Wilderness Act under Section 2 a) For this purpose there is hereby established a National Wilderness Preservation System to be composed of federally owned areas designated by Congress as "wilderness areas", and these shall be administered for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness, and so as to provide for the protection of these areas, the preservation of their wilderness character, and for the gathering and dissemination of information regarding their use and enjoyment as wilderness.

And under Section 2 c) An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable.

Your announcement that all Wildernesses on the Sierra and Sequoia National Forests-over 842,000 acres of Wilderness in total-are subject to your Sequoia and Sierra National Forests Prescribed Fire Project, defies what is stated in these sections of the 1964 Wilderness Act. The Forest Service should exclude all designated wildernesses in order to comply with this section of the Wilderness Act. These would include some of America's most loved Wilderness areas, the Ansel Adams, Dinkey Lakes, John Muir, Kaiser, Kiavah, Monarch, South Sierra, Dome Land, Jennie Lakes, and Golden Trout Wildernesses.

The agency should instead allow natural occurring, lightening caused fires to play its ecological role in wilderness. 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. Furthermore, the cutting down and removal of undesirable trees or the reforestation efforts of planting seedlings run counter to the Wilderness Act as well. Wilderness needs to be left unaltered to enable scientists to study the effects of climate change in these natural areas. These wilderness areas carry the highest level of protection to preserve their natural state. Please do not set a precedent by bypassing these protections because once lost, they will never be regained. Mother Nature knows best. Let her take care of her own.