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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am commenting in favor of USFS Prescribed Fire Project #63783, with reservation.

I have lived in the community of York for the past 34 years. During that time I have spent countless hours recreating, harvesting firewood and fighting fire (YFSA volunteer) on the Helena National Forest. I have also been observing the effects of USFS vegetation management projects on the forest for many years. I am in favor of these projects, but would like to see better management of contractor work in some instances. My considered opinion is that these projects have been beneficial for forest health, wildlife and wildfire safety. I am aware that use of prescribed fire has risks but would rather the USFS choose the timing of burning where practical, rather than the larger risk associated with extreme fire weather events.

My largest concern with these projects is with sloppy contractor work. For example, I've too often witnessed where weed-control contractors have applied too much chemical on native vegetation, yet miss many of the noxious weed that they are there to kill. A neighbor who also borders USFS land told me of watching contractors seemingly simply applying chemical in a widespread manner without apparent care to targeting weed species. So I urge the USFS to manage such contracts carefully; for example try to ensure qualified staff and consider that a time & material approach would tend to favor over-application.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.