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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello,

I live about a mile from the proposed project area along the NM165 corridor - and I oppose this project moving forward at this time due to a lack of community engagement and a lack of information shared with specifics about the use of fire in our particular area. We need detailed specifics about how fire will be used and what accountability measures are in place to follow that protocol for leadership and for crews. I am VERY concerned about the use of prescribed fire by the National Forest Service (with very good reason). Before the approval of this project, our community needs more information about what changes have occurred in National Forest Service practices in New Mexico after the catastrophic Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon fires.

I attended the recent public meeting. While I understand the importance of and need for a healthy use of fire for forest management, the Forest Service's responsibility for the Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon fires does not instill confidence in the protocol used by the National Forest Service to determine the appropriate use of fire based on our local conditions.

The Hermits Peak fire was caused due to "unexpected erratic winds in the late afternoon" which on April 6th is a very typical occurrence in our area. Afternoons and evenings get very windy. It happens every year. Especially in a canyon! While a Forest Service representative in the public meeting was very emphatic about the wind speeds that determine whether fire is used or not, the lack of awareness of changing local conditions at that time of year has already been catastrophic and there has not been sufficient acknowledgement and communication around what practices will be/have been changed by the National Forest Service in light of the horrific wildfire caused by their own crew.

I formally request another public meeting prior to the approval of this plan to specifically address how the Forest Service proposes to manage prescribed burns in our area, based on local conditions, and how practices have changed in light of the Forest Service's responsibility for the wildfires that devastated New Mexico communities in 2022.

Thank you -