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First name: Nancy
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Title:
Comments: I have owned a home that borders Apache Canon in Placitas for 42 years. During this time Las Huertas Canyon has accumulated an incredible amount of dead fuelwood as well as many over crowded trees. The Forest Service has done nothing to reduce the fuel load in all the years that I have lived here. Las Huertas Canyon has very steep terrain and the thought of any control burning is unthinkable given the current conditions with the very clear possibility of a fire burning not only our beloved Sandia Mountains but our homes that are in the path.

I attended the community meeting in Placitas that was organized to discuss the idea of fuel reduction in the Las Huertas corridor. The Forest Service personnel talked about the conditions in the Sandias as well as different options to control the fuel. Control burning is very popular with the Forest Service because it is the cheapest option but the end results of fire spreading and getting out of control is a much more expensive path. I strongly support that no control burning of any kind to be allowed in the canyon.

Prior to the large fires in Las Vegas and Hermit Peak last year the residents attempted to convince the Forest Service to not allow any control burning but they ignored their concerns and went ahead to control burn the fuels which lead to a catastrophic fire that burnt peoples homes and mountains. People in Placitas are so afraid that you will do the same thing and ignore our concerns.

At the meeting in Placitas the FS personnel understood that the Sandias and the Las Huertas Canyon has a highly dangerous amount of dead wood and stated that nothing will be done for 5-7 years to reduce the fuels. This is unthinkable to wait this long giving the extreme conditions for an uncontrolled fire to burn Placitas homes and our mountain.

For 2 years the Sandia Collaborative has met to try to deal with this huge overload of wood. Forest Service personnel were involved with this group and participated in several zoom meetings as well as meeting with Jon Couch in person to look over the conditions of the terrain. A Nepa study was conducted and a plan was made to start removing the wood. At this time the District Ranger said we can't do anything as we have other projects and have no money for Las Huertas and they put the group on hold.

We can not wait 5-7 years until you get it together to start removing the fuels here. At the meeting we discussed being stewards of the land and ourselves removing the wood as the Forest Service is not willing to do this anytime soon. There are groups in Placitas that have the ability to organize this and can take the responsibility of removing the dead wood.

The comment period for your plan was 30 days and many have not even heard of your plans. This feels like you don't want comments and will just go ahead to do whatever you want. I fail to understand why you would make such a short comment time when you don't plan to do anything for 5-7 years. Most plans give 90 days to comment on so I am requesting that you extend the comment time so you can hear all the voices in Placitas about your fuel reduction plans.

The Las Huertas Canyon is a tinder box and ready to burn the whole forest down due to it being neglected for so long. I feel this project needs strong attention from the Forest Service and that they do something now and not wait until 5-7 years from now. Under any circumstances do not allow any control burning in the Las Huertas Canyon!!!!

It is advisable to conduct more meetings in Placitas as the residents are very concerned about your plans to use

fire for fuel reduction. Other options should be explored to let the residents start removing the wood close to Placitas.