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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

I do not think that any of the forest south of Highway 212 should receive treatment for the following reasons:

1. These forests are healthy and mature and do not need intervention.
2. They are situated along Soda Butte creek, on north facing slopes where they hold plenty of moisture, and protect the riparian area. Great efforts have gone into restoring Soda Butte Creek after the impacts of mining in the area. Logging could create erosion and introduce excessive sediments to the creek.
3. These forests sit on the wilderness boundary, and have wilderness qualities, providing critical habitat and a seamless interface between Silver Gate and Cooke City and the wilderness to the south.
4. Logging these forests under the guise of fuels reduction, no matter how selective and sensitive the approach, will only create lasting impacts that will diminish the quality of the forest and open the forest to drying effects and yes, actually making it more prone to fire and burning.
Logging will increase the opportunity for the spread of noxious weeds, which are present throughout the Cooke City area already. Any additional disturbance will exacerbate the problem.
5. These forests survived the 1988 fires that swept through that area; in fact, they were too wet to burn when the USFS tried to blackburn them as the wildfires approached. They do not need a hand to be more fire resistant.
6. A majority of the area south of Highway 212 are Inventoried Roadless areas that will be negatively impacted by the incursions of logging by opening the forest to potential illegal roads and mechanized use.

Additionally, I believe that the comment period should be extended.

Thank you for your time,

Leo Leckie

Montana Resident