

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/24/2024 11:59:42 PM

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Comments: Dear Forest Service:

For two reasons I wish to oppose any prescribed burnings in the Sequoia and Sierra National Forests.

First, heaven knows there has been enough unwanted burning in California's national forests for the past decade. I realize that brush and downed trees, aka "fuel," accumulate on forest floors and pose significant dangers should lightning ignite any of this debris. However, I strongly believe that other actions, such as occasional thinning, can mitigate this danger if these forests are monitored carefully and systematically.

Second, please consider the function of all of California's forests, especially mature stands, in absorbing carbon. The state of California has been a leader in fighting climate change, and I would think that burning forests deliberately, even for perceived ecological benefits, ought to be the last action that the Forest Service would employ to manage its timber lands.

Thank you for considering my comments, and please let me know of your final decisions on this proposal.

Cordially,

Michael Shurgot, PhD