Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/14/2025 1:39:28 AM
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Comments: I would like to express my support for the West Reservoir Project. Common sense project like this are long overdue, and lack of projects like this have contributed to 100-year lows in area deer and elk populations.

This is a great project from a forestry standpoint but even a better project from a habitat enhancement perspective. The prescribed burning, commercial thinning and White Bark Pine restoration components are all great to see.

I do have a few comments that I would like to submit as suggestions to maximize the habitat enhancement/wildlife benefit of this project.

The wildfires that occurred in the early 2000's up Alpha-Beta and also from Flossy Creek to Pioneer Ridge have left long lasting detrimental impacts. Within 10 years post burn there was an explosion in deer and elk populations targeting these fresh burns. Now we at or in excess of 20 years post burn. Almost all areas that were burned in these mega fires have led to such dense regeneration that deer and elk can no longer survive in these areas, or not at the levels they should be. I highly recommend proposing second entry prescribed burns in as much of these old burns as possible. These old burns if left untouched will take generations (or a full tree life cycle) before they are returned to viable habitat or merchantable timber. Please consider reburning more of these old burns.

In commercial thinning units I would recommend trying to maximize edge effects. This can be accomplished by irregular shaped units, but I would also have the following recommendation. Modern forestry practices are great, any thinning conducted would result in far better habitat that what we currently have. However, I would highly recommend incorporating multiple cover cluster into thinning units. What I mean by this is I would recommend specifying 50-100-yard circles scattered throughout units where no thinning take place. That way you leave additional cover and further maximize edge effects and ensure there is amble bedding areas located adjacent to good forage areas created by the thinning units.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment. It is incredibly exciting to see the USFS proposing stewardship projects like this once again.