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Comments: To whom it may concern,

The proposed "Pike's Peak Vegetation Management" plan favors private industry over public lands.

1. The Plan Threatens Protected Wildlife and Habitats

The plan poses a direct threat to federally protected species and sensitive ecological areas. As a federal agency, the Forest Service has a legal mandate under the Endangered Species Act to ensure its actions do not jeopardize listed species or their habitats. Proceeding with a project that will likely have detrimental impacts potentially violates federal law and ignores the inherent value of maintaining biodiversity in the region.

2. The Scale and Methods Are Environmentally Destructive

The proposal involves aggressive and potentially widespread action like logging and burning. The massive scale of 200,000 acres represents a significant industrial operation, not subtle "vegetation management." The use of vegetation treatments raises concerns about water contamination in local watersheds and the overall health of the ecosystem. The combined effect of logging, burning, and chemicals could cause severe soil erosion, harm aquatic life, and degrade the scenic and recreational value of a landmark area like Pikes Peak.

3. "Vegetation Management" is Used as a Euphemism for Commercial Logging

The use of the term "vegetation management" for such a large-scale project is a blatant attempt to downplay the commercial and industrial nature of the activity. This is standard commercial logging disguised under a banner of "forest health" or "fire mitigation." The proposed actions permanently alter the natural forest structure and character of iconic roadless areas, which were explicitly designated to be protected from this kind of industrial intrusion. The project prioritizes timber extraction over conservation mandates.

4. Roadless Areas Must Remain Untouched

The inclusion of four designated Roadless Areas in the project scope is a major setback for conservation efforts. These areas are intended to remain wild and free of development. Introducing logging operations necessitates building new temporary roads, which fundamentally destroys the 'roadless' character and opens up previously untouched areas to further disturbance. This ignores the public mandate to preserve these specific wild spaces for future generations and non-motorized recreation.

I urge you to reconsider this plan, as it represents an environmentally destructive overreach that sacrifices protected roadless areas and threatened wildlife habitats for the sake of industrial logging.

Thank you for your time.