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First name: Travis

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to formally oppose the proposed logging and forest "restoration" project along the Middle Fork of the Flathead River and in the Skyland area near the Great Bear Wilderness.

The Middle Fork of the Flathead is one of the most ecologically intact river corridors in the lower 48 states. It provides critical habitat for threatened and sensitive species, serves as an essential wildlife corridor connected to the Great Bear Wilderness and Glacier National Park, and offers outstanding opportunities for recreation, solitude, and wilderness character. Any large-scale logging project in this area risks permanently degrading the very values that make it nationally significant.

I am particularly concerned that this project is being advanced under the banner of "forest restoration" without sufficient evidence that commercial logging in this location will meaningfully reduce wildfire risk or improve ecosystem health. Scientific research consistently shows that logging projects located far from communities do little to protect public safety, while often increasing road density, fragmenting habitat, spreading invasive species, and elevating sedimentation into nearby waterways. The Middle Fork corridor is not a community at risk-it is a wild landscape that should be managed for ecological integrity, not timber extraction.

The proximity of this project to the Great Bear Wilderness is also deeply troubling. Logging, road construction, and increased human activity near wilderness boundaries undermine wilderness character, displace wildlife, and erode the sense of remoteness that Congress intended to protect. Once these impacts occur, they cannot be undone.

While I appreciate that the Forest Service is soliciting public input even though it is no longer legally required to do so, meaningful public involvement must include a genuine willingness to reconsider or withdraw proposals that pose unacceptable risks to irreplaceable landscapes. In this case, the potential harms to wildlife, water quality, recreation, and wilderness values far outweigh any purported benefits of the project.

I urge the Flathead National Forest to:

Withdraw or significantly scale back this proposal

Exclude logging and new road construction near the Middle Fork of the Flathead River and the Great Bear Wilderness

Prioritize true restoration approaches that focus on road decommissioning, watershed protection, and habitat connectivity rather than commercial timber harvest

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for considering the long-term health of one of Montana's most treasured wild places. Future generations are counting on thoughtful, precautionary stewardship decisions today.

Sincerely,

Travis Brower

Helena, MT