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First name: JL

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Acting Forest Supervisor,

I am submitting comments in strong opposition to the North Trinity County Community Risk Reduction Project. This project proposes commercial logging across thousands of acres of Northern Spotted Owl Critical Habitat, Late Successional Reserves, and includes more than 2,000 acres of logging in Riparian Reserves, in one of the most ecologically significant landscapes in the National Forest System. It also pushes the increased risks found in the research on the Dixie Fire (plantation trees spread fire faster and more intensely than natural forests).

These watersheds support over 30 documented NSO territories. The low-elevation forests between Trinity Lake and the Trinity Alps Wilderness represent the last functional stronghold for this endangered species. They provide refuge in the sea of flammable clearcuts surrounding and intertwined with the project area.

What this project describes, at this scale, leaves a forest permanently altered in character and ecological function. Reducing canopy cover, removing large trees over 20 inches, with miles of temporary roads, skid trails, and likely hundreds of clear-cut log landings not a community risk reduction prescription. What would remain is a disturbance footprint that is vast, long-lasting, and wholly inconsistent with forest resiliency by any scientific measure, as seen on Rainier Road.

I urge you to revise the EA around a prescription that is targeted, enforceable, and grounded in science. Protecting communities and protecting wildlife are not mutually exclusive. Treating small-diameter vegetation, limiting harvest to trees under 20 inches, using the existing road system, and maintaining 60 to 80 percent canopy cover would reduce fire risk instead of increasing without dismantling the forest that wildlife depends on.