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First name: Paola

Last name: Berthoin

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Acting Forest Supervisor,

I am submitting comments in 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. Such a plan is unconscionable.

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. It would be absolutely criminal and pure folly to destroy this habitat that the Northern Spotted Owl absolutely depends on, not to mention so many other animals and the whole of the ecological network that this forest is.

What this project describes, at this scale, leaves a forest permanently destroyed 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 an extreme, ravaging disturbance footprint that is vast, long-lasting, and wholly inconsistent with forest resiliency by any scientific measure, as seen on Rainier Road.

The organization NatureServe estimates that 34% of plant species and 40% of animal species in the U.S. are at risk of extinction. The organization also estimates that 41% of ecosystems are at risk of range-wide collapse.[1,2]

NatureServe is a non-profit that collects data from a network of more than 60 governmental and non-governmental programs in the U.S. and Canada.[3] They are generally viewed as providing the most credible and comprehensive evaluation of the state of U.S. biodiversity.

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 without dismantling the forest that wildlife depends on. Please, for the sake of all who depend on a healthy forest and the watershed...that includes people such as yourself and your family and freinds, now and in the future.

Sincerely,