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First name: Taavi

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Acting Forest Supervisor,

I am submitting this comment to oppose the North Trinity County Community Risk Reduction Project, which proposes roughly 8,500 acres of commercial logging in Trinity county between Trinity Lake and the Trinity Alps Wilderness.

This is an excessive and unnecessary amount of logging to reach the project's stated goals. This degree of logging would have substantial environmental and recreational impacts in the area, including impacts for endangered species, like the Northern Spotted Owl.

According to your agency's own descriptions, these forests are overcrowded mostly by trees under 20 inches, and yet this project proposes a 30-inch limit, excluding landings, skid trails, and logging corridors, and temporary roads, which would allow for even larger trees to be cut.

Balancing fire resiliency and species recovery doesn't need to be hard or complicated. Using the existing road system, focusing exclusively on small-diameter trees under 20 inches, and maintaining 60-80 % canopy would reduce wildfire risk, while still promoting wildlife habitat and recreation activities.

I spend most summeries backpacking in the Trinity Alps Wilderness. It's obvious that wildfires are a risk to the area, but we can't throw the baby out with the bathwater by destroying the very thing we're trying to protect. Any project in this sensitive area should be designed to have minimal impact on wildlife habitat and natural ecosystems.

As it stands, this project falls well short of that. This project would permanently alter the character and environment of the area. Roads, even temporary ones, increase erosion and leave lasting environment impact. Reducing canopy cover and tress over 20 inches will fundamentally alter the forest, displace wildlife, and leave ugly, long-lasting scars on the landscape.

I strongly urge you to amend the environmental assessment based on targeted, enforceable, and science-based objectives. Limiting harvest to trees under 20 inches, removing or treating small diameter vegetation, and limiting logging to using the existing road system would accomplish the goal of reducing wildfire risk, without destroying the forest, it's ecosystem, and the recreational opportunities local communities and visitors rely on.

Sincerely,

Taavi Tajala