

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/6/2026 10:55:32 PM

First name: Kathy

Last name: McDaniel

Organization:

Title:

Comments: RE: Roby Management Project

This project is another attempt to allow area sawmills to continue harvesting mature trees without regard to good forest management. There are already too many areas in the Black Hills that have been clear cut (for the benefit of the sawmills) but to the detriment of wildlife, recreational users, and long-term health of the forest.

The removal of large fire resistant trees while leaving the small trees and large slash piles doesn't reduce fire hazards, since prescribed burning rarely happens due to our arid climate and current drought situation. The fragile soils and landscape are also tore up by the gigantic machinery now used by logging companies, which also results in invasive species like thistle to flourish. Timber harvesting has already led to invasive grassland species encroaching and a more open, less resilient forest structure. Scientists and conservationists warn that repeated clear-cuts can permanently alter the landscape, increase wildfire risk, and reduce biodiversity.

The amount of logging allowed now in the Black Hills is unsustainable. I do understand the tremendous pressure from our congressional representatives and the current administration to influence the Forest Service to act against good forest management. But the US Forest Service is legally mandated to operate under the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 (MUSYA), which requires weighing the interest of five co-equal purposes (outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, wildlife and fish). This project appears to put timber harvesting way before the other four purposes and is not the best management tool for the forest.

There is no true emergency for this Roby Project, just the need for the sawmills to get more timber. The real emergency will occur in the not-so-distant future when all harvestable trees in the Black Hills are gone, along with our tourism, recreational users, and wildlife (all of which generate massive amounts of income for so many businesses). Please do not prioritize timber harvesting over good forest management and keeping our Black Hills beautiful for our future generations.