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First name: John

Last name: Roche

Organization:

Title:

Comments: The Forest Service should not finalize this Finding of No Significant Impact as written. The strongest problem in the agency's own record is that its Canada lynx effects analysis is admittedly out of date: after the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service revised designated critical habitat in July 2026 and cut the total acreage by 32 percent, the Canada Lynx Critical Habitat section states plainly that "the effects analyzed in the current biological assessment are now overestimates." Instead of redoing that analysis with the corrected boundaries, the agency reinitiated consultation and received concurrence within days. A finding of no significant impact cannot rest on effects estimates the agency itself says are wrong.

Several other gaps undercut the reasoned basis for this decision. The National Historic Preservation Act - Section 106 Review section admits cultural surveys are still "underway for the northern half of the project area," yet the FONSI is being issued anyway. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Section 40807 section confirms that because 73 percent of the project sits in the emergency determination area, the analysis "is not subject to the objections process under 36 CFR 218," removing the public's normal right to object to a 30,167.6-acre, 20-year project. And the Road Maintenance, Haul Routes, and Temporary Roads section admits there are "no markets for much of the material" generated by treatments, which sits uneasily next to the EA's claim that economic effects are "largely beneficial."

* Extreme Economic Risk to Tourism and Agriculture: Lake Chelan's economy relies heavily on summer tourism, outdoor recreation, and world-class wine and fruit agriculture. Introducing persistent smoke and charred landscapes over a 20-year period will heavily impact tourism. Furthermore, wine grapes are highly susceptible to smoke taint, and repeated nearby burns put our local vineyards and orchards at direct financial risk.

* Severe Public Health Threats: Prescribed burns release dangerous particulate matter (PM2.5) into the air. Because of the unique topography of the Lake Chelan basin, smoke frequently gets trapped in the valley, exposing residents-especially children, the elderly, and those with respiratory conditions-to prolonged, hazardous air quality.

* Landslide and Mudslide Vulnerability: The steep slopes rising above Lake Chelan are already prone to instability. Stripping away vegetation and altering soil composition through extensive burning drastically increases the risk of flash floods, mudslides, and severe soil erosion during heavy rains, threatening homes and infrastructure below.

* Escaped Burn Hazard: Even under strict parameters, prescribed burns carry an inherent risk of escaping control. Given the unpredictable wind patterns off the lake and the region's increasingly hot, dry climate, a single escaped burn could easily turn into the very catastrophe the Forest Service is trying to prevent.

The agency should recirculate a corrected lynx effects analysis using the actual 2026 critical habitat boundaries, complete Section 106 surveys across the full project area before issuing a final decision, justify or withdraw its use of emergency authority to bypass the 36 CFR 218 objection process given the project's scale and duration, and reconcile its conflicting statements on the economic value of the material this project would generate. Given these unresolved issues, the agency should extend the comment period and prepare a full Environmental Impact Statement rather than proceed on a Finding of No Significant Impact.