

June 10, 2019

Mr. James Melonas, Forest Supervisor
Mr. Gennaro Falco, Forestry Program Manager
Santa Fe National Forest
11 Forest Drive
Santa Fe, NM 87508

RE: Scoping comments for the Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project

Mr. Melonas and Mr. Falcon,

Mr. Falcon, you asked me to send my ideas and therefore I address this letter to you and Supervisor Melonas.

As a WUI resident of Cañada de los Alamos I would request you accept my comments as part of the public record regarding the Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project.

I ask that you to carefully review the current studies from world-renown, dedicated and respected scientists (listed below), some from your own organization. Any decisions made for any project, of any size, at this point in time should consider and include the information shared by these learned people, and should be considered in an EIS.

But frankly, for me, after reviewing the scoping document, attending meetings, and hiking through other prescription areas in the Santa Fe National Forest for many years, I am firmly and completely against any semblance of thinning and burning currently exemplified.

As a biologist, I see no improvement in habitat, diversity, or resiliency of the forest in these areas. On the contrary, I see the opposite. And I see decades needed to generate even a moderate recovery of health. Combined with the run-away-freight train of climate chaos we have no wiggle room to play the odds. A management plan gone bad will certainly reduce our ability to insulate Santa Fe from severe climatic change.

As a living, breathing resident of the community I am physically affected by the 'prescribed' burns, as are many others, including the ones without voices - the animals. This plan to reinitiate fire into our landscape by bombing oxidizing toxicants such as potassium permanganate and ethylene glycol is not only inhumane to the animals and insects in the forest who cannot run from this dastardly 'treatment,' but is creating more ill-will for the Forest Service than you

probably realize. As a medical doctor I would like to state my strong opposition to this practice of all 'prescribed' burning and especially with the use of these toxicants.

I understand it must weigh heavy on the shoulders of the Forest Service that another mega-fire could take lives and property. The blame would surely land on your organization. But, to undertake such drastic, permanent 'treatments' as you are proposing in response to fear reminds me of my clients who are terrified their animal might catch a contagion, and then fool-heartedly agree to toxic, invasive procedures only to have more illness and often more expense.

Mr. Falcon, you asked for ideas and I submit these comments and scientific studies as the backbone of those ideas. I eagerly welcome the opportunity to discuss specific projects to improve the health of the forest and include the community of Santa Fe - the children, the artists, the elderly, the WUI residents, the urban slickers, the environmental groups, the farmers, and everyone else in between.

These troubling times call for bold, daring and innovative solutions. It seems to me it is the time to think, cooperate, and function *like* a forest. I realize the Forest Service is mandated by higher-ups; but if the Forest Service could undertake a brave, new approach I guarantee there will be the widest and deepest support for a change in consciousness and methodology. Anything short of a new way of relating will meet with opposition, frustration and frankly the further demise of our climate and community. Essentially, a zero-sum game.

If you are interested in truly finding a 'common ground,' and not just an inculcation of the public, please know that I, along with many others, are interested in thinking and working *like* a forest, *with* you, *with* Nature, but not against her.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dee Blanco, DVM
Cañada de los Alamos

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Robert L. Beschta, et al

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<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23151970>

Date submitted (Mountain Standard Time): 7/10/2019 12:00:00 AM

First name: dee

Last name: drdeebianco.com

Organization:

Title:

Comments:

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