

SAMPLE COMMENT LETTER

I am writing you today to ask the Forest Service to REJECT the proposed changes to its National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) policies. The proposed changes would allow the agency to move project planning behind closed doors by cutting out the public from the decision-making process and eliminating any science-based review of impacts to water, recreation, and wildlife.

These changes would create loopholes to increase the speed and scale of resource extraction including logging and mining -- while eliminating public awareness and input on up to 93% of proposed projects. If implemented, the changes would severely restrict the ability of local communities to weigh in on Forest Service projects impacting them. This is wrong and I urge you to REJECT these proposed changes.

In addition, the proposed changes:

- **Put clean drinking water at risk of pollution.** Millions of people in the U.S. depend on clean water that originates in our national forests. These forests serve as natural purifiers. Logging, mining, road building and related activities degrade streams and waterways and pollute water. To safeguard the nation's supply of clean drinking water, the Forest Service should reject this rule.
- **Give extractive industries supremacy on public lands.** The primary beneficiaries of the new rule are logging, mining and oil and gas companies who would directly benefit from broad discretion the forest service would now have to approve massive extractive projects with no public or scientific involvement.
- **Reduce backcountry recreation opportunities.** The new provisions of this rule could result in thousands of miles of new roads being built into our last remaining wild places, with no public involvement or notification. Once these roads are built, they will forever change opportunities for backcountry recreation into our last remaining wild places.
- **Endanger wildlife and pristine forest land.** This rule will result in dramatic increases in mining, oil and gas leasing and clear-cut logging that will have irreparable consequences on wildlife and carve up our public lands turning them into industrial parks.

The Forest Service should address the root causes of inefficiency in environmental decision-making, by increasing funding, staffing, and training and reducing staff turnover. This draft rule is a thinly veiled attempt to make it easier to rubberstamp permits for massive corporations to clear-cut, drill, and mine in our national forests.

Thank You,

[YOUR NAME]
[PHYSICAL ADDRESS]
[EMAIL]