

Hannigan, Edith@BOF

From: Fred DeVault <fred@fdevault.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 31, 2016 1:04 PM
To: Vegetation Treatment Program@BOF
Subject: Public Comment re Cal Fire VTP PEIR

Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
ATTN: Edith Hannigan, Board Analyst
VTP Draft PEIR Comments
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VegetationTreatment@bof.ca.gov

31 May 2016

Re Draft PEIR, Cal Fire Vegetation Treatment Program:

Dear Ms. Hannigan:

I, a lifelong citizen of California now in my 56th year, write to you in public comment regarding Cal Fire's Vegetation Treatment Program (VTP) Preliminary Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). I urge summary rejection of the VTP PEIR, both on the specific legal grounds that Cal Fire's plan fails to meet the requirements of CEQA, and on the more general grounds that it will needlessly cause major and irrevocable environmental damage. Specifically:

1. Circumventing CEQA - impacts determined to be less than significant by the "Fallacy of Authority" (our conclusions are true because we say so – no evidence provided).
2. Substandard Research - misrepresenting cited scientific literature and dependence on anecdotal evidence.
3. Inadequate Data - outdated fire hazard analysis model/data unsuitable for project level planning.

As I believe you are aware, The California Chaparral Institute has separately commented at length regarding the details of the above claims.

California has more natural diversity, and more social conscience, than almost any other state. What the world needs now, and what California can give if it tries, is real leadership. Not just talk by activists, but actual leadership, at the agency and policy level — leadership which shows how a modern society can live in harmony with the environment. If not us, who?

The Cal Fire VTP PEIR is obviously a lazy attempt to push an anti-"brush" agenda through the required process. I do not fault Cal Fire's effort to prosecute their essential

mission of protecting suburban and rural homes from wild fire. What I fault them and their plan for is the attitude of saving homes at any cost.

We can no longer live in this world with the attitude that we can do what we want, regardless of environmental impact. That protecting suburban sprawl is worth any price. If Global Climate Change has taught us anything, it has taught us that we must stop whistling past the graveyard when it comes to environmental impact.

Do the right thing for California, for the chaparral environment, for the future, and, honestly, for Cal Fire. We need them protecting our homes — but within limits which truly respect the environment. If that requires educating suburban and rural homeowners and requiring them to accept more risk, so be it. That in itself would be real progress.

Destroying the chaparral in order to make it safe to live near it: This is no “plan” at all. Please put a stop to it.

Sincerely,

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