



Officials back up salvage timber plan in NM

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ALAMOGORDO, N.M. -- The U.S. Forest Service has rejected an appeal filed by environmentalists over the **Lincoln National** Forest's plan to offer salvage timber sales in an area decimated by looper caterpillars.

The forest's plan provides for salvage harvest on about 5,200 acres in the Sacramento Mountains that were defoliated by the insects. It also calls for removing hazard trees along 8 miles of roads, trails and utility lines.

WildEarth Guardians and Center for Biological Diversity had filed a 23-page appeal of the project in June. The groups argued that the project would violate federal laws and state water quality standards.

Regional forest officials found that the project was consistent with the Lincoln's forest plan and agency policy.

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