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Preserve our Forests in the Nantahala-Pisgah National Forest Plan Revision

Dear Kristin Bail, USFS North Carolina Forest Supervisor,

Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests are a true natural treasure. I value the forest for its clean water, the wildlife habitat it provides, and the health benefits I receive from recreating in wild nature.

I understand that the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests are revising their Land and Resource Management Plan, which will guide the management of this precious National Forest for years to come and am disturbed at the direction the Forest Service is going with its draft plan by opening up almost 70% of the forest as suitable to logging. This is a shocking proportion of the landscape to be designated for timber production and ignores the wide array of ecological services and economic benefit WNC?s provide to local communities, especially considering that many of these areas are roadless, potential wilderness areas. I think that the new plan should include the following elements:

- 1) The revised plan should include strategies to prevent invasion by non-native plants, pests, and pathogens.
- 2) Protections for stream buffers and old-growth forests from the 1994 plan should be carried forward.
- 3) Roadless Areas and Potential Wilderness Areas should be placed under management that does not allow commercial logging and road building.
- 4) The new plan should focus on restoring the most degraded ecosystems on the National Forest, rather than manipulating areas that are currently in good condition.

Thank you for the work you do to steward the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forest for all Americans. The Forest Plan Revision is a great opportunity to pass our natural heritage along to future generations so that they can enjoy the benefits of clean water, forests, and a healthy environment.

Sincerely,

Dustin Ahrens