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Pisgah Wilderness Concerns

I am concerned about the proposed Management Plan Revision for National Forests in this region. We have some of the most picturesque and bio diverse forests on the entire planet. Our deciduous forests are among the oldest on Earth. We as a society owe the utmost care to management of these resources. Economically, this area attracts millions of tourism dollars from people who visit just to experience the relatively undisturbed backcountry scenery and wilderness access.

I do not support commercial logging in these areas heavily used for recreation, such as Pisgah Forest, North Mills River, and Big Ivy. Commercial loggers leave virtual wastelands in their wake, prone to excessive erosion and the further proliferation of invasive species such as kudzu and multiflora rose. Not to mention the horrible blight left within clear view from the Blue Ridge Parkway and Cherohala Skyway scenic roads.

I do not support USFS timber production in areas of the forest with heavy recreational use, including the Pisgah District, especially in the Davidson River and South Mills River areas. Timber production in these areas could negatively impact the backcountry recreational experience.

I do not support the proposed Wilderness designation in the Pisgah and Grandfather Districts for Daniel Ridge, Laurel Mountain, Cedar Rock Mountain, South Mills River, Woods Mountain, and Jarrett areas. These areas have a high concentration of trails and are heavily used for recreation, including mountain biking.

I request that the USFS include the above-mentioned areas in a new National Recreation Area that would give the land the maximum protection while allowing for mountain biking.

I also support a National Recreation Area designation in the Grandfather District that would include Harper's Creek, Lost Cove, Woods Mountain and Jarret Creek.

Some of the Wilderness proposals in areas where there is no mountain biking make sense. Conservation groups and other forest stakeholders should be tasked to identify these areas.

Please consider the overall environmental and economic impact of the proposed plan revision ahead of short-term gains from timber industry.

Regards,
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