

Date submitted (UTC): 1/5/2015 8:09:59 PM

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Title:

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Comments:

re: Proposed Wilderness Extensions in Grandfather and Pisgah Ranger Districts

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this to implore you to please refrain from adding the proposed Wilderness Area Extensions in the Grandfather and Pisgah Ranger Districts. Specifically:

Grandfather District

[http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/stelprd3823604.pdf](http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprd3823604.pdf)

- 11010 Dobson Knob ext B
- 2549 Linville Gorge addition
- 5702 Lost Cove
- 4465 Upper Wilson Creek
- 7036 Harper Creek
- 4944 Harper Creek ext. sugar knob
- 7518 Jarett Creek
- 11795 Mackey Mountain
- 9905 Woods Mountain

Pisgah District

[http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/stelprd3823606.pdf](http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprd3823606.pdf)

- 9303 Daniel Ridge
- 5784 Cedar Rock Mountain
- 2521 Shining Rock ext. Sams Knob
- 2249 Shining Rock ext. Graveyard Ridge
- 5586 Laurel Mountain
- 12294 South Mills River

I am affiliated with two very respectable Wilderness Therapy Outfitter Guide Programs (SUWS of the Carolinas and Four Circles Recovery Center, both programs of Aspen Education Group/CRC Health Group) who have been permitted and operating in these areas for 15 years. Neither of these programs are permitted to operate in designated wilderness areas.

Unless the stipulations on their permits change as well, the proposed wilderness area additions in these districts will eliminate their ability to operate in NC.

Along with the significant amount of revenue both programs provide to the USFS every year; I believe their stewardship of the land, trail maintenance, and support of other users has been a benefit for the USFS and community. For example in the years that Four Circles Recovery Center has operated, they have assisted local authorities in at least 3 serious rescues of lost or injured individuals in the Pisgah District. In addition both programs regularly remove a significant amount of public user trash from trails and campsites. Based on this, and the overwhelming positive impact these programs have on the families they serve and the high quality of staff they employ, it is our belief that these programs benefit the USFS and local communities.

Thanks you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Dave Browning  
Land Use Management  
Aspen Education Group | CRC Health Group  
Asheville, NC