

Date submitted (UTC-11): 5/22/2017 12:32:20 PM

First name: Holly

Last name: Terry Reiling

Organization:

Title:

Official Representative/Member Indicator:

Address1:

Address2:

City:

State:

Province/Region:

Zip/Postal Code:

Country:

Email: tereiling@yahoo.com

Phone:

Comments:

National Forest Plan

Dear Forest Service,

The Pisgah-Nantahala National Forest in western NC is the second most visited forest in the country. Its large tracts of road-free forest, important headwaters, old growth forest, and native trout habitat are reasons why locals and tourists alike LOVE the area and choose to hike, bike, swim, kayak, canoe, raft, camp and pursue other outdoor pursuits there.

Locals and tourists do NOT choose to visit the Pisgah-Nantahala National Forest because of logging. In fact, logging is a THREAT to its most treasured recreational gems. These treasured recreational gems ARE the economic drivers of the area's economy. Logging only is an economic driver for a few corporations. Logging does NOT provide the numbers of jobs generated for the peoples and communities that surround the Pisgah-Nantahala National Forest.

Big Ivy, the Black Mountains, Mackey Mountains, and the Tusquitee Bald all deserve and require expanded protection in the upcoming national forest plan. Communities and counties have passed resolutions advocating for protection. How can the voices of local peoples, the ones who live & thrive due to the treasured environmental gems in their area, be ignored? Yet, most of these areas remain unprotected in the latest draft of the management plan.

People are hungry for the wilderness experience. People are hungry for restoration, water quality, cultural heritage, and helping tourism in the local gateway communities. Thus, people need and deserve STRONGER forest protections that protect old-growth forests, clean waters, and recreational resources.

Thank you.

Holly Reiling
Asheville, NC