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Protect Big Ivy

Big Ivy is one of the largest old-growth forests and most cherished wild places in the East. The Forest Service's preliminary draft plan leaves one-third of Big Ivy open to logging, including 1,000 acres of old-growth forest on Coxcomb Mountain and Snowball Mountain. You have placed both the Coxcomb Mountain and Snowball Mountain sections of Big Ivy in management areas that emphasize logging.

This preliminary draft plan also falls short of protecting Big Ivy's trail network and pristine watersheds from logging. You have tentatively labeled part of Big Ivy as a Special Interest Area, but this vague, undefined designation would still permit logging and road building throughout the area.

Specifically, I encourage the Forest Service to protect ALL of Big Ivy by doing the following:

- Designate Big Ivy's trail network and the old-growth forests of Coxcomb Mountain and Snowball Mountain as backcountry.
- Designate Big Ivy's trail-less, high-elevation forests as wilderness as recommended by the Buncombe County Board of commissioners.
- Ensure that any Special Interest Areas in Big Ivy prohibit logging.

Please do the right thing and protect Big Ivy. You cannot place value on something so rare and precious.

Thank you,
Jonika Houk