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First name: Gloria

Last name: Raheja

Organization:

Title:

Official Representative/Member Indicator:

Address1:

Address2:

City:

State:

Province/Region:

Zip/Postal Code:

Country:

Email: raheja@umn.edu

Phone:

Comments:

Protecting Big Ivy

Dear Allen Nicholas, Matt McCombs, Michelle Aldridge, and the Forest Service Planning Team:

I am writing as a Minnesota-based professor of anthropology who frequently travels to North Carolina to conduct research, and as an individual who cares deeply about the North Carolina mountains and its forests.

I am told that the most recent preliminary draft of forest plan materials leaves much of Big Ivy unprotected, including the 1,000 acres of old-growth forest on Coxcomb Mountain and Snowball Mountain. The vague, undefined Special Interest Area also does not adequately protect Big Ivy's forests and watersheds. All of Big Ivy is in need of protection and I urge you to do the following:

- Designate Big Ivy's trail-less, high-elevation forests as wilderness as recommended by the Buncombe County Board of commissioners.

- Designate Big Ivy's trail network and the old-growth forests of Coxcomb Mountain and Snowball Mountain as backcountry.

Thank you for everything you do to help protect Big Ivy and the forests of the Pisgah-Nantahala.

Sincerely,

Gloria Goodwin Raheja
Professor of Anthropology
University of Minnesota
395 HHH Center
301 19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455

<http://cla.umn.edu/about/directory/profile/raheja>