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Comments:

Forest Plan revision

I am against 'Wilderness' in any shape, form, or fashion. Wilderness leads to a sick forest. There are no provision for access by mobility impaired users, existing roads are closed, there are no insect and disease controls, no prescribed or managed burns, and no timber management. Additionally, the existing wilderness areas are not utilized.

Two good examples are what happened to the Tellico River in Cherokee County allowing overuse and then closing the area, and the recent wildfires last fall in 'wilderness areas'. The first time I went into Tellico, we drove a two-wheel drive pickup and went everywhere we wanted with no difficulty. My last trip was on an ATV and we struggled with all the holes and dodging other ORV's.

In my younger days, we were able to drive in to hunt or fish, not only there, but the headwaters of Whig Creek and Charleys and Beech Creek in the Southern Nantahala Wilderness.

We were taught to respect the forest and other users. We carried an axe and a shovel for cutting trees across the road and draining or filling mudholes, cleaning ditches and culverts. Countless times, we hauled out hikers in trouble from overdoing it or hypothermia.

Out West, there is an entirely different mindset??..sharing use. You can camp and ride ATV's on the main roads, not so in the East.

Thank you for considering this.