

From: [Eric Gracey](#)
To: [FS-comments-southern-chokeee-watauga](#)
Subject: [External Email]Create needed habitat for ruffed grouse and American Woodcock on the Cherokee National Forest
Date: Wednesday, February 8, 2023 11:52:16 AM

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I'm writing in support of the Pond Mountain Project, early successional habitat on the Cherokee National forest is under represented, furthermore state forest action plans and FIA data throughout the SE US shows an aging forest with early successional forest type being under represented on the landscape. It is no coincidence that as early successional habitat has been under represented on the National Forest and overall landscape the species that depend on these forest types have seen a dramatic decline in population numbers. The USDA Forest Service has a responsibility as the stewards of our public lands to ensure that distribution of age classes on the National Forest are equally represented to protect and enhance the habitat needs for both early and late successional species.