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First name: William

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello!

I have some comments and recommendations regarding the Pine Creek Forest Restoration Project. I am the creator of the Kentucky Waterfalls, Arches and Landscapes Group on Facebook which at the time of this message has nearly 42,000 members making it the 3rd largest waterfall group and the largest Kentucky outdoor group on that social media site. Last year, as well as throughout this past winter and spring, the double waterfall on Pine Island Branch in Laurel County became the most popular place in Kentucky. The group was inundated with photographs of this place from numerous members. Everyone was asking for directions in the group and I received an unbelievable amount of instant messages and emails regarding its location. Some were even right there wandering the woods messaging me for help on where to find it. Though most of my messages/emails were from Kentuckians, I got a surprising amount of out of state emails in reference to the waterfall and how to get to it. All of my directions to the falls were via parking on Forest Road 4117 and approaching the falls from the East. Between FR 4117 and the Pine Island watershed is where Early Seral Areas and Crop Tree Release Forest Management is being proposed. That is where people are accessing the falls. I propose that this section of forest be spared. Not only do I propose sparing this section of forest but I also propose that a trail be built to Pine Island Double Falls. It is genuinely one of the most unique places in the state and it is apparent that it is creating tourism for the area. Cutting the forest above the falls will not only inhibit folks ability to visit because of equipment and safety issues but will also remove a beautiful forest to visit the falls in. The area surrounding the falls I think should be preserved for future generations to enjoy.

Pine Island Double Falls GPS coords: 37.07148, -84.29668

I do have a few other concerns regarding landforms and the proposed Restoration Project. I ask that the Forest Service take into consideration first two locations listed and insure their safety. The first two of the following landforms are unmolested and very few in the outdoor community know of their existence. The third, I am deeply concerned about because it looks like it is in a Proposed Early Seral Area.

#1. Rock Creek Natural Bridge. Coords: 36.98820, -84.31397 Located between Forest Road 4175 and Rock Creek in Laurel County. I can not tell by comparing my coords with the Map Proposal if it will be affected by the Proposed Midstory Removal at Rock Creek. Please keep this Natural Bridge in mind when work begins in this area. It is a thinner natural bridge and if a large tree were to fall on it directly it may take it out completely.

#2. Garrison Natural Bridge. Coords: 36.96344, -84.38903 Located between Forest Roads 5177 and 5176 in Pulaski County. According to my GPS location this natural bridge should not be affected by a Proposed Woodland Treatment but the proposed area is very close to the location of the bridge. I ask that the Forest Service also please keep this Natural Bridge in mind when work begins in this area as well.

#3. Fishtrap Natural Bridge. Coords: 37.18470, -84.25650 Located north of Forest Road 4095 in Laurel County. This natural bridge is one of the most impressive bridges in the state. The proposed Early Seral looks like it includes the area surrounding the bridge. This is another place I propose be spared from being cut and be saved for future generations to enjoy.

Attached is a photo of each of the following: Pine Island Double Falls (courtesy of my good friend Adam Thompson), Rock Creek Natural Bridge, Garrison Natural Bridge and Fishtrap Bridge for your reference.

Thank you

Bill Fultz

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Kentucky Waterfalls, Arches and Landscapes

Member: Natural Arch And Bridge Society