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First name: J. Lance

Last name: Kilby

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Betty Jewett Forest Supervisor, Ryan Foote District Ranger

I submit this comment in regards to future plans affecting the management of the Chattooga Ranger District. I am in full support of most provisions outlined in the proposal including pine thinnings, oak restoration, and shortleaf reestablishment. I believe these activities are a crucial tool in forest health, wildlife management, water quality as well as rural economic development.

I would like to see more harvest activities in the Rabun, Habersham, & Stephens County areas focusing on pine plantation first & second thinnings, small hardwood clearcuts and shelterwood cuts as well as mature white pine harvest.

However, I do not like the idea of eradicating planted stands of white pine & loblolly due to the notion of "nonnative species removal". These areas should be managed to maturity then the final harvest and restoration process can begin. Also non productive hardwood stands should be treated to promote even age/ early succession natural regeneration with some slash or herbicide treatment early on. This should be harvested initially using methods of clearcut, shelterwood/ overstory removal. In addition to these requests, all Virginia Pine should be removed during any and all harvest operations.

In conclusion, I am a lifelong resident and logger/ timber buyer of Rabun County. For 25 plus years I've seen the negative effects of non-management policy and fear if we don't change the scope of operation the forest, wildlife, and water quality will suffer to the point of no return. an outspoken minority have had a stranglehold on forest activities for far too long and hope you can push ahead with this plan and manage this forest as it should be. I thank you for your commitment to this issue and hope good things are on the horizon.

Feel free to contact me for any questions or comments.

Very Sincerely,

/s/ J. Lance Kilby