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First name: Rachel

Last name: Ward

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Good afternoon,

I'm sure you have received numerous emails, comments & phone calls regarding the matter at hand, logging the mountain at Jellico Creek. I support alternative 2, ZERO acres logged. I am a Whitley County native. I grew up here & there's not much of Jellico Creek I haven't been on. Jellico Creek holds a special place in my heart for many reasons, but I will only list a few. The first one, is sentimental reasons. I don't want another part of my childhood erased. Please allow me to explain. My Papaw, Raymond Higginbotham live right on the Whitley/McCreary Co. line. Going to Papaws was an all-day event back when I was a girl because the "new road" (HWY 92 W) wasn't a thing then. We'd embark on an adventure to Papaw's going up the mountain then back down the mountain, enjoying all the various sites along the way. The leaves changing colors & wildlife so close you could reach out & touch them. Once we arrived at Papaws, we would visit for a bit & then venture into the surrounding woods for whatever shenanigans we could get into. When the "new road" came through it was called progress. We were told it was something the county(ies) needed. The "new road" actually took my Papaws house & part of the land. Sadly, Papaw is no longer with us & is buried next to one of the Churches on Jellico Creek. My second reason for being in complete opposition of logging Jellico Creek is the negative impact it would have on our local tourism. The City of Williamsburg (Whitley County) hosts the LARGEST Jeep Jamboree in the WORLD. Part of the reason the Jamboree is so successful in little ol' Whitley County is because of our mountains. People travel from all over the US to come here & enjoy the beauty we take for granted every single day. Attached you will find a few pictures from the last couple years Jamboree's. I cannot tell you the amount of people that comment on how amazing it is to be out in the woods, "off grid" as some like to call it 'cause they have no cell service. The number of children that come to the Jamboree with their parents & Jellico Creek is their FIRST interaction with the woods & wildlife is astonishing. How sad would it be to drive along HWY 92 E & not see the beautiful changing colors of the leaves & the wildlife popping out but instead see a barren mountain side? Over the years I have seen the messes left from logging in Whitley County. Wildlife is disheveled, no longer having their home & mud slides along the road not to mention how awful the mountains look when the loggers are finished. Attached you will find photos from the Jeep Jamboree over the last few years. Those smiles are not something that can be bought & are there because of the mountains. I wish I had time to search through my photo albums & upload the photos from my Papaws. Jellico Creek mountain holds a special place in my heart, I'd hate to see it destroyed. Please, leave Jellico Creek alone.