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Comments: I am sixty year old and have lived near the CNF for all my life near Dahlonega GA. I have spent countless hours enjoying the outdoor recreation opportunity afforded by the national forest. My main activities have been hunting, fishing, camping and hiking.

I am disturbed by the direction forest management has taken over the last 30 years. I believe that the preservationists, as an extremely vocal, organized, and well funded minority have had way too much influence on forest management, or maybe I should say, the lack of management. I am speaking primarily about Forest Watch and the Sierra Club. In my opinion we have designated more than enough wilderness, no management, and old growth areas. These areas are poor habitat for the majority of wildlife species with very limited recreation opportunity for the Forest's human neighbors.

I believe that research based scientific management is the way to go. I am especially for even-age timber harvest (clear cutting) as a means for creating quality early successional habitat. This type of habitat is especially lacking on the forest at this point in time due to the lack of timber harvest over the last 3 decades, but it is beneficial to most forest species and is absolutely critical for others. I believe we are on the brink of losing certain avian species from Georgia because of this. Furthermore, riparian early succession is virtually non-existent due to restrictions on timber activity near any kind of water, and here is where the most critical need lies. Cutting only on high dry ridges does not give the riparian early succession that is so important for the species who live their lives near water. For example the ruffed grouse population has plummeted to near zero over the last 3 decades and lack of habitat is the primary issue. There is no good evidence that properly carried out timber harvest has ever threatened the population viability of any forest species or damaged any stream.

In short, I support multiple use and scientific management. I believe we have had enough of pandering to the emotional arguments and hands off approach of the preservationists. The pendulum needs to swing in the other direction, in favor of recreational opportunity, increased wildlife populations including game species to be hunted, timber harvest, healthy fisheries and even human use.

/s/ Trent G. Conner, Dahlonega,GA