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First name: Roger

Last name: Thoma

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Expand Public Outreach, Protect the Wayne National Forest

Dear Supervisor Tony Scardina,

I am a professional biologist in Ohio employed by Midwest Biodiversity Institute. I am currently conducting a State-wide conservation study of Ohio's crayfish fauna. Needless to say, I have spent considerable time in southern and southeastern Ohio in the Wayne National Forest area. I am writing to inform you that my studies have found that many of the rarest crayfish species are found in the Wayne National Forest area. These species are primarily under stress from poor land use practices that have resulted in excess sedimentation and reduced water quality. It is critical that any changes to the Wayne NF do not exacerbate sediment and water quality problems but actually reduce current sediment loads and improve water quality so this endangered fauna can recover to a more stable status.

So, I am writing to request that you and the Forest Service host assessment, scoping and other meetings about the Wayne's land management revision process in all major metropolitan areas in Ohio.

People from across the state use the Wayne National Forest for hiking, fishing, camping, bird-watching and other forms of recreation. So it's critical that the Forest Service involve these people by publicizing and hosting meetings in places like Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Toledo, Akron and Dayton.

It's also important that the Forest Service be proactive and searching in its efforts to identify information about the potential harms that fracking, mining and logging could bring to the Wayne's forests, streams, watersheds and biodiversity.

Toward that end, I urge you to consult with regional and national experts in the fields of conservation biology, landscape ecology, climate science and environmental toxicology. And I urge you to identify and synthesize summaries of the scientific literature, so the public is fully informed about the impacts of various land uses, especially fracking.

Sincerely,

Roger Thoma