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First name: Dale

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am a frequent visitor to the forest lands on and around Bull Mountain, Jake Mountain, Springer Mountain, including the hiking and mountain bike trail system as well as the forest road system. I've brought friends and family to the forest, hiking the Appalachian Approach Trail, and staying at the Len Foote Hike Inn. I realize not all of these places are included in the proposed land management changes, but for me, as a user, they are all connected by the nature and the Earth.

I've visited these trails and mountains to volunteer my time and energy, not just for a better hike or ride, but also for the conservation aspect as we work to control erosion and lead the trails away from sensitive areas.

I've come to this forest to participate in running and mountain biking races that benefit the organizations that work to maintain and conserve the area, I've also volunteered to work these events, spending many hours afterwards to make sure the roads and trails were left in better shape than we found them.

I've met many of the Forest Rangers who work in these mountains and on these roads, and over the years we've learned to recognize each other. I trust these men and women with my safety, the safety of others, and I trust them with the Forest.

But I fear these people, the people who work in and love our Forest and our Mountains are not the people who have written the proposals that cause me to feel that our Forest and our Mountains are at risk of being damaged for the purpose of logging and it's associated atrocities.

I don't fish the trout streams, but I visit them to watch the fish and the fishermen who might try to catch them. I respect the bears and the snakes that I see nearly every time I visit, and like the fish and birds, I believe it is our responsibility to protect them and their environment.

In the past, the Forest Service has done a wonderful job of managing the Forest and the Mountains, I've seen the controlled burns, the machine cut trails, the carefully built dams. This proposal does not seem to follow that lead, it is vague and feels unseemly, as if the Forest Service might be trying to sell our Forest and our access to it. That may not be the true intention, but it is important that the Forest Service realizes, understands, and accepts, that these parcels of land are important to the public, certainly the Georgia public, but also to the greater public of these United States.

The forest in and around Boling Park in Canton, is currently being logged. That forest is now nearly unusable by the public. The waterways through it, that feed the nearby river are ruined, the carefully maintained trails are ruined, the natural beauty is ruined. It may not recover in my lifetime, it may never recover at all. Please do not cause this to happen to our Forest on our Mountains, the money gained is not worth the cost.

Again, when I bring people to Georgia, I don't take them to Atlanta, I bring them to the places they cannot visit in every other city in every other State. We hike or bike some the forest roads, we have lunch at Montaluce Winery, hike or ride Jake or Bull, and eat dinner in Dahlonega. We might ride the 7 Gaps, stay at the Mulberry Gap bed and breakfast, and visit Nimblewill Church.

Please consider the requests and desires of the equestrian club who organizes the trailwork events, and the many other people like myself and my family, who consider these Mountains and this Forest the most important aspect of Georgia