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Comments: I am writing specifically to voice my concerns regarding the plans for widespread use of herbicides in our forest that is part of the Foothills Landscape Project plan and is addressed in the Environmental Assessment. The Vegetation Plan that supports the Foothills Environmental Assessment calls for pesticide applications on over 65,000 acres. Some limited applications may be necessary and understandable, for example to treat infested hemlock and ash trees, and control kudzu, but the sheer amount of forest that will be treated with chemicals under the Foothills plan is disturbing and shocking. Although the Forest Service states that it uses "best available science" in its plans and risk assessments, the most current science referenced about chemicals it plans to use is the 2011 risk assessment methodology developed for the Forest Service by Syracuse Environmental Research Associates. With the pace of research, knowledge and legal judgments concerning pesticides and herbicides, even a layman knows that 2011 science in this area is not necessarily the most current and best available science available.

The Forest Service has goals to achieve, but in pursuing its goals we hope that it consider how little it really knows about the potential long-term impacts of applying herbicides so extensively on our forest lands. Once the damage is done, you cannot undo it.

Thank you for your consideration of my concerns and for your care for our forest.