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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Foothills Landscape Project. The foothills are important to me for their natural beauty, and I am often hiking, camping, or backpacking near Lake Conasauga, Emery Creek, Warwoman Dell, or the wild and scenic trails along the Chatooga River. I treasure these areas, and I am very concerned about a few aspects of the Foothills Landscape Project.

My biggest concern is that the project, as currently proposed, does not give meaningful opportunity for public comment through the NEPA process. These are public lands, and the tax-paying public must have the opportunity to know and comment on the details of site-specific treatments prior to those treatments being approved. The huge scope of this project could make major impacts on the land, and the public has a right to be informed on what exactly will be done. In this way, the public will be able to help the Forest Service fix the foothills in a meaningful way. I suspect the Forest Service wants to get things done quickly, but removing the NEPA process is not the right answer. Please put NEPA back.

I am also concerned about the vast amount of logging and the building of new roads, especially in roadless areas. I urge you not to harvest trees or build new roads in roadless areas. There are so few beautiful and pristine areas left in our world, so leave the roadless areas that way. New roads in these areas will cause more sediment in the streams; harvesting trees will cause damage to the land. Let's keep our water as clean as possible and our roadless areas untouched.

Lastly, the use of herbicide concerns me. I understand that some limited application may be necessary, but please scale back the amount proposed in this project. There is scant data on how some of these chemicals will affect the forest and humans in the long-term. It would be better to be more cautious and limited with the use of these chemicals.

I urge the Forest Service to include the NEPA process for public comment on site-specific details prior to approval, and I ask that logging, roads, and the use of herbicides are much more limited than the current proposal.