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First name: Kieran

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Supervisor,

Thank you for all your hard work and stewardship of the forests of North Georgia.

I appreciate this opportunity to comment on the Foothills Landscape Project. For more than half of my 59 years the national forests of North Georgia have been a joy and a refuge for me and my family. We have enjoyed endless hours of hiking, trail running, camping and exploring. These forests are precious to us.

The remaining roadless areas in the Foothills are our absolute best chance to have clean air, clean water and healthy forests anywhere in the Georgia.

As you know, every year development and increased pollution add more contamination to our air and water. The protection of our national forests is vital if we are to have clean air and groundwater.

The proposed Foothills Landscape Project concerns me greatly. The scale of logging and herbicide use will take generations to recover from and will cause serious environmental side effects. More importantly, the time span of the project and the lack of specifics make it impossible to support.

The notion that we would spray herbicides on an area greater than 115 square miles is frightening. There are areas where invasives like kudzu should be contained, but herbicide should be a last resort and used very selectively. The unavoidable consequences- erosion, silt, chemical pollution and ground water contamination should be carefully weighed in each instance and the public should have the right to weigh in on the decision. We have to live with the consequences.

We have little enough true wildness left in Georgia, roadless areas where hikers and campers can really experience unspoiled nature.

Prescribed burns are necessary for management. Commercial logging and logging roads are not.

Over 90 square miles of new logging activity and undisclosed miles of new roads will have a huge negative impact. Please don't harvest trees or make new roads in our roadless areas. As you know roads dump more sediment into streams than any other management activity.

I urge you to be a responsible custodian of our largest parcels of intact forest in North Georgia.

Please take on board the work of Georgia Forest Watch in their "Georgia Mountain Treasures" document.

We hold this wildness in trust for future generations.

More urgently, as Georgia continues to grow we need every leaf of this great green lung to continue to clean our air.

Sincerely,

Kieran Reynolds