Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/11/2020 2:57:46 AM

First name: Ray Last name: Brooks Organization:

Title:

Comments: The Foothills Landscape Project could be the best proposal for the Chattahoochee National Forest has ever seen. Being from Pickens County, GA, I frequent the Chattahoochee National Forest on a regular basis for hunting and fishing endevors. Over the course of my life, I have noticed a drastic decline in the quantity of wildlife in and around the Chattahoochee National Forest. Grouse, which were a staple of upland hunting in the state as well in southern Appalacia, are but a mere memory. Their brown and white plumage only a figment of the imagination. Deer, perhaps the most sought after game animal in Georgia, are virtually nonexistent. With one to two deer per square mile, deer hunting in the Chattahoochee National Forest is only terrible, at best. The wild turkey, perhaps the greatest success story for wildlife recovery in the state, have dwindled to dismal numbers on the National Forest. However, there is hope. The overarching cause of the decline in populations of game in the National Forest is lack of habitat, particularly new growth forests. Less than 1% of the entire National Forest is new growth, and remains monoculture habitat. This is the absolute worst thing possible for any forested area. Any biologist worldwide can attest that monoculture habitat leads to the destruction of wildlife populations and overall forest quality. With the Foothills Landscape Project, there is hope to reverse the harmful effects of the lack of habitat diversity. I strongly support this initiative, and firmly believe that within ten to fifteen years of new growth forest initiatives, wildlife populations will rebound at an unprecedented rate.