Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/21/2022 4:00:00 AM
First name: Charles
Last name: Smith
Organization:
Title:
Comments: To: Ken Arney and James Melonas, U.S. Forest ServiceRe: Objection to Nantahala and Pisgah NFs Plan Revision #43545Dear Ken Arney and James Melonas, U.S. Forest Service,The Pisgah-Nantahala Forest Plan is seriously flawed and shouldn't quadruple logging and weakenprotections for the country's most popular national forest [mdash] it should strengthen protections andincrease protected areas.The plan must be revised to do the following:[bull] Protect all 101,000 acres of the most important recreation and conservation areas. [bull] Protect allremaining old-growth forests. [bull] Protect the entire Craggy National Scenic Area. [bull] Prohibit logging onsteep slopes. [bull] Prohibit logging in the Appalachian Trail viewshed and other major trail corridors andviewsheds. [bull] Prohibit logging within 100 feet of all waterways, including ephemeral streams. [bull] Considerthe carbon and climate benefits of mature and old-growth forests for all decisions. [bull] Reduce logging andpesticide use. [bull] Protect all of the state natural heritage areas. [bull] Include plans to help safeguard specificspecies, as well as robust, enforceable protections for their habitat. [bull] Accurately account for naturaldisturbance and the need for more old growth forests. In its draft record of decision and finalenvironmental impact statement, the Forest Service fails to properly analyze 4,000 acres of the Craggyand Big Ivy sections, which contain old-growth forests, popular recreation trails, panoramic vistas andmunicipal drinking-water sources. Instead of including these key conservation and recreation areas in itsForest Scenic Area designation, the agency has placed them in its highest-priority logging designations.The Forest Service must amend its plans to include 4,000 acres of Snowball Mountain, North Fork, ShopeCreek and Ox Creek in its Forest Scenic Area designation.In addition, in choosing Alternative E [mdash] rather than any of the four alternatives released to the public [mdash]the Forest Service has picked a final plan that wasn't available for public comment. Alternative E fails toaddress the key concerns and priorities expressed by mostforest users. More than 92% of 22,000 public comments supported stronger protections and moreprotected areas.The plan fails to protect more than 101,000 acres of important conservation and recreation hotspots. Itplaces thousands of acres of old-growth forests and 65,000 acres of North Carolina's natural heritageareas in the highest-priority logging designations [mdash] while placing more than a quarter-million more oldgrowthacres in logging-priority designations. The plan permits logging in the A.T. National Scenic Trail,Bartram Trail, Benton MacKaye Trail, and National Historic Trail of Tears corridors.I strongly object to the plan and request the Forest Service to fix the plan's significant errors, flaws,erroneous assumptions, and inaccuracies as detailed in the bullet points above. I am willing toconsolidate my objection with the I Heart Pisgah coalition. Thank you for your consideration.