

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 12/5/2022 9:01:29 PM

First name: Adam

Last name: Colette

Organization: Dogwood Alliance

Title: Programs Director

Comments: On behalf of the Dogwood Alliance and our tens of thousands of members across the US Southeast, including Kentucky, we would like to voice our opposition to the Jellico Vegetation Management Project #63037 in its current form.

As it stands this project contains an unnecessary amount of industrial-scale forest management (including clear-cutting) that will leave potentially significant and lasting impacts on the forest's resiliency and water quality, as well as the local community and economy.

Protecting our natural resources from degradation is more important than ever. Excessive management and economic-centered outcomes have driven forest degradation in the US South and across the globe to an all-time high, and communities, biodiversity, and our climate are paying the price. Opportunities to change this dynamic can often be few and far between. The forests of Southeast Kentucky and Jellico Mountain present one of these opportunities. We don't need younger forests; we need standing forests.

We suggest that the Jellico Vegetation Management Project #63037 plan be adjusted significantly to reprioritize community goals of greater forest protection. Increased opportunities for community and organizational involvement should be available throughout 2023.