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First name: Rachel

Last name: Watts

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To: U.S. Forest Service

I have concerns about the proposed Jellico Vegetation Management Project. I am an avid backpacker and hiker. The Daniel Boone has been a place of refuge for me to escape the hustle of daily life. It is a local refuge for backpackers, hikers, and land stewards alike.

This project will affect 10,000 acres of public land. Land that belongs to all Americans. The three types of proposed forms of clearcutting will destroy the landscape and the extreme disruption will invite a multitude of invasive species, like Tree of Heaven and Autumn Olive to dominate the landscape. These invasives have already taken over sections of this forest from clearcutting that happened 30 years. More clearcutting is not the answer. I am against Deferment Harvest, Two-Aged Shelterwood Removal, and Clearcutting.

This region of the Daniel Boone is full of very steep slopes and coal seams. When these areas are clearcut and exposed, they are prone to erosion, landslides, and unprecedented flooding. Erosion and sediment flow into waterways and put federally endangered species at risk, like the Kentucky Arrow Darter, an aquatic fish only found in this area of the world. The flooding that has wreaked havoc across eastern Kentucky in the last few years is a direct result from excessive clearcutting, oil extraction, and mining. We do not need any more fouled water in Kentucky.

I also encourage the Forest Service to consider how this logging project will affect old growth and the carbon sequestered there. With the current climate crisis, old growth forests are one of the greatest assets we have to combat climate change. This forest is worth more **STANDING**. Rural Kentucky has been exploited for its natural resources for decades. This wild, public land should be protected instead of destroyed for profit. How high can a Hickory grow? If you cut it down, then you'll never know.

Thank you,