

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/9/2023 1:20:05 AM

First name: Andrew

Last name: McLean

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Project Official,

I am writing to submit my comments regarding the requested withdrawal of 20,574 acres of National Forest System lands in the Pactola Reservoir - Rapid Creek Watershed, as outlined in the Notice of Intent published on March 21, 2023. I appreciate the opportunity to provide my input on this matter.

First and foremost, I would like to express my support for the public comment period and the scoping comment period for the environmental analysis process. It is commendable that the USDA Forest Service and the USDI Bureau of Land Management value public participation and seek input from the community.

As a concerned resident I believe it is crucial to carefully evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed withdrawal on the natural resources, ecosystems, and communities within the Pactola Reservoir - Rapid Creek Watershed. The withdrawal of such a significant area of National Forest System lands should be based on a comprehensive understanding of the ecological, social, and economic consequences.

In order to make an informed decision, I strongly urge the agencies to conduct a thorough and transparent environmental analysis, considering factors such as water resources, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, and potential long-term implications. This analysis should also evaluate any potential conflicts with existing valid rights, ensuring fairness and protection of all stakeholders.

Furthermore, I would like to request additional opportunities for public engagement beyond the public meeting scheduled for April 26, 2023. Town hall meetings, workshops, and open forums can facilitate a more inclusive and collaborative process, allowing community members to voice their concerns, ask questions, and provide valuable insights.

In closing, I appreciate the efforts made by the USDA Forest Service and the USDI Bureau of Land Management to gather public input on this matter. I believe that a well-informed decision, taking into account the diverse perspectives and interests of the community, is crucial for the sustainable management and conservation of our natural resources.

Thank you for considering my comments. Please include them as part of the project record. I look forward to continued updates and involvement in this process.

Sincerely,