

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/24/2024 5:00:00 AM

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Comments: I want to express my concerns about the proposed coal mining in the Ouachita mountains with the hope that the Forest Service will decide NOT to approve this proposal. First and for-most, I have concerns about the damage to the environment and water quality that results from coal mining in the form of hazardous metals that are released from mining runoff. This issue has been documented in other locations where coal is mined. In addition to the run off problem, there is also the damage that will occur over a long period of time from building and maintaining the power line with herbicides, one section of which is through a wildlife management area. The Forest Service is charged with sustaining our nation's forests. Supporting the infrastructure of commercial coal mining does not fit the current organization's climate change policy especially in a sensitive wildlife management area.

I also have concerns as an Arkansas tax payer. I see nothing in the proposal about improving and maintaining the roads that will be traveled to remove and ship the coal. There's also the increased cost of health care services for miners. The adverse impact on the health of miners is heavily documented. Why should I as a tax payer who will receive no benefit want to assume these costs?

My greatest objection stems from the location of the purchasers of the coal itself. This coal would not be mined to benefit the citizens of Arkansas or even the United States. Instead the coal will be sold in other countries. Our forest lands which should be preserved for future generations and should not be permanently damaged for the short term profit of a company that sells our resources to other countries. I respectfully urge the Forest Service to reject this proposal and continue to preserve our forests for future generations.