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First name: Alan

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello All,

My name is Dr. Alan Harrelson, a McCreary County landowner in the Osborne Creek community. I am quite concerned about the original proposed action revealed to the public by the forestry service in 2022. I own over 200 acres, including some pristine bottomland that flanks Osborne Creek for half a mile. I am glad to see two alternatives are now offered as a result of major public outcry against the clearcutting plans in particular. And while I am personally in favor of alternative two (the do nothing option), alternative one is measurably better than the original proposal.

The USFS anticipates this logging project will bring money into the community through timber workers buying food, fuel, staying in hotels, etc. I am of the opinion that this is the wrong way to better the economy of this area, and whatever purchases are made by workers during the proposed logging project will be negligible at best. In fact, in light of the much larger amount of money that the forestry service (and perhaps others) will receive through the proposed logging contracts, to say that local businesses will benefit from the sale of hamburgers and gasoline makes it look as if the forestry service is throwing local citizens a bone in order to keep them satisfied and appeased.

The natural, mature beauty of the Jellico mountains can offer far more economic benefit to the area if the local community and the forestry service work together to develop recreation, tourist, and educational opportunities that teach schoolchildren about our natural Appalachian ecology. Of course, these forests have already been tampered with in the past, which means any lack of botanical diversity is the result, to some degree, of bad logging practices in previous decades. I've never seen a logging job that looked pretty. Clearcutting especially destroys natural beauty in the most drastic way. Local citizens, including my family and myself, draw much inspiration and joy from the natural beauty of our local lands, hillsides, and mature hardwood forests. Unlike logging contracts, inspiration and joy cannot be bought; there is no price tag for it.

Many people in our local community are adamantly opposed to the original proposed action. Alternative two would be best, but alternative two might at least remove the clearcutting plans. We do not want herbicides, soil erosion, or pollution of our streams and creeks. We do not want noise pollution to destroy our peace. Helicopters, chainsaws, dozers, and whatever else should not be part of our daily life for the next 40 years. A life surrounded by the machines and noise of our modern culture is not really life at all. What's clear to me is the forestry service, and perhaps local county governments, are the people who want this 10,000 acre project to move forward. I see no way how local landowners and citizens who live in these mountains will benefit from this logging at all.