Data Submitted (UTC 11): 6/20/2024 4:38:15 PM
First name: Daniel
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Comments: To whom it may concern, I am strongly in favor of Alternative 1 - No Action. Duke Energy was given the opportunity to provide a number of times that a vegetation-caused outage or interference has caused the company to need to shut down power to the receiving residents in Canton and could not provide me a number. They simply explained the fact that any time there's a vegetation related incident, they have to shut down power for safety while it is repaired. But they could not tell me if that is once a year; once a month; once a decade; etc. Duke Energy enjoys the privilege of sharing our natural resources as they cross the national forest. As a customer, I am proud of the work they have done to maintain this line with minimal impacts on the ground or to the viewshed. But we cannot give over even more of our resources to a private company who did not plan their power grid better. They could choose to decentralize power and/or build another line from another power station that doesn't cross such a sensitive area. This is not their only option. Widening this corridor would have major negative impacts to MANY trail, roads, views and of course, the Blue Ridge Parkway--our hometown National Park. The proposed action still categorically changes the interaction between our forest ecology and forest users, despite the mitigation measures. Trails like Avery Creek will be heavily impacted with changes to the character of the trail and increased direct rain and sun. I don't want to look down from overlooks on the Black Mountain Trail and see an alternating swath of power lines--right now it is barely noticeable. Again, Duke and the USFS have done an AWESOME job with the current corridor by absolutely MINIMIZING the visual and on-the-ground impacts of this ROW and you should be proud. Aside from impacts to the view and opening up the canopy over our trails, I also do not want to have to trust a power company to perform regular hazard tree removal with the care that I would want for the forest. Using our trails and roads to get any kind of machinery back there on a regular basis is not something I want to allow. I also believe the increased ROW and lower, less dense canopy of the HTZ will encourage invasive species that could destroy our forest far beyond the ROW. Go look at Nantahala Gorge and the obscene amount of kudzu is in that corridor. That kind of ecological disaster in Pisgah keeps me up at night. We don't need to give invasive species any helping hands by increasing an already problematic situation (any ROW is going to be a corridor for invasive species). Again, I am very happy with the current level of impacts. I am proud of Duke's efforts to maintain safety and power delivery within the current ROW. If that ROW doesn't meet their needs they can find another alternative. I have no problem with Duke needing to work harder to maintain a power line through a beautiful and sensitive place like Pisgah National Forest--they should have to work harder, and what we have right now is working. PLEASE, do not allow Alternative 2 to proceed. I am in favor of Alternative 1 - no action. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.