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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To whom it may concern (if anyone),

It is unfortunate that people like me who have no forestry background but who regularly use and enjoy our National Forests, must plead with those responsible for maintaining the health of our National Forests. You are neglecting care of the Old Growth forests in the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests. These forests need to be preserved, not harvested. They are a precious resource that you should be preserving, not allowing people to economically exploit and ruin. Once they are harvested, they are gone, irreplaceable.

We are facing an existential crisis for humanity with human caused climate change. Old growth forests are a natural asset that mitigates climate change because they are a huge carbon sink. It is madness to do anything but preserve them as we continue to spew carbon and methane into our atmosphere. Yet, your plans contemplate sacrificing part of the existing old-growth forests.

Old-growth forests store large amounts of carbon, clean the air we breathe, maintain and increase biodiversity, filter water, and reduce wildfire risks. You know this but fail to preserve these critical resources. NOGA offers an opportunity to better protect and restore old-growth forests, but only if it's finalized and implemented properly. You need to get on the ball.

In addition, the old-growth forests of the Nantahala-Pisgah National Forests are home to several endangered and threatened species, including four species of endangered bats and the imperiled Blue Ridge lineage of green salamanders. This is yet another important reason to protect these unique assets. Why do I need to remind you of this value? Unfortunately, across the nation, old-growth forests are in decline, facing stressors from pests, extreme weather, and commercial logging. NOGA offers an opportunity to better protect and restore old-growth forests, but only if it's finalized and implemented properly.

Please protect the Old Growth forests for which you are responsible. Properly implement NOGA and preserve this critical asset for future generations.

Charlie Guyton