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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I strongly urge the National Forest Service to move forward with Alternative C: No new leasing. The Conecuh National Forest is home to many keystone species within the Alabama ecosystem, including the Gopher Tortoise and the Red-cockaded Woodpecker. Longleaf pine forests have already been on a steady decline over the past several decades. (Now only reduced to roughly 2.7 million acres, previously this number has been as high as 90 million acres.) Furthering the drilling opportunities within the Conecuh National Forest would be extremely detrimental to this precious ecosystem. For instance, the red-cockaded woodpecker is currently an endangered species that creates cavities in longleaf pine trees for nesting and foraging, which is key to their survival. A further reduction in this habitat can have a huge impact on their survival.

On a personal note - My family and I have not gotten the opportunity to visit Conecuh National Forest, as we just moved to Alabama in 2023. I implore the Forest Service to allow my family the opportunity to visit this National Forest without further oil and gas development and the environmental consequences that come along with it.