

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/6/2026 12:03:15 AM

First name: Stacey

Last name: Shaver

Organization:

Title:

Comments: To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed expansion of quartz mining activities within the Ouachita National Forest, particularly in areas that may impact the Central Arkansas Water (CAW) watershed.

My primary concern is the protection of water quality. The Ouachita National Forest is not only a place of recreation and natural beauty, but also a critical source of drinking water for a large portion of Arkansas residents. Any activity that increases the risk of sedimentation, erosion, or contamination within this watershed deserves the highest level of scrutiny.

Quartz mining, even when conducted on a relatively small scale, involves ground disturbance, vegetation removal, and the creation of access routes. These changes can increase runoff and sediment entering nearby streams and tributaries. Over time, even incremental impacts can accumulate, potentially affecting downstream water sources, including those relied upon for public drinking water.

Clean, reliable water is not easily replaced or restored once compromised. While quartz is a valued natural resource, it is not essential in the same way that a protected watershed is. The long-term risks to water quality outweigh the short-term benefits of expanding mining operations into these sensitive areas.

In addition, the Ouachita National Forest serves as an important space for recreation, including hiking and trail use. The value of preserving these lands in their natural state-for both ecological integrity and public use-should be carefully considered in any decision-making process.

I respectfully urge the U.S. Forest Service to prioritize the protection of the CAW watershed and deny or significantly limit mining activities in areas that pose a risk to water quality. Once these resources are impacted, the consequences will be felt far beyond the boundaries of the proposed project area.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this matter.

Sincerely,

Stacey