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First name: Reid

Last name: Landes

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I had a chance to read over the Environmental Assessment (EA). I've never read an EA before: I was glad to see it as a neutral "just the facts"-type document - as it should be. I also tried to learn a bit about commercially-mined quartz. I understand that in the U.S., Arkansas and North Carolina are key states in quartz mining. I learned a bit about how quartz is used in products, like counter tops and lenses (to name a very few). Good information to know.

I'm not wholly opposed to this proposal of permitting quartz mining in the Ouachita National Forest. I think the "Alternative A" plan is the better way to go than the "Proposed Action" at this point in time. Here's my 2 main reasons:

(1) Alternative A allows for some exploration and mining, which can help the economy, but keeps it scaled back from the Proposed Action. Implementing Alternative A gives the companies a chance to see what's out there and, importantly, to show the surrounding communities the care with which they treat this privilege.

(2) The Proposed Action increases sedimentation to the drinking water sources notably more than Alternative A. The amount of sedimentation from the Proposed Action is worrisome, taking two of the sub-watershed areas to a high risk level of sedimentation, and some more to a moderate risk level. This isn't good for the waterways and drinking water. (I really like the water provided by Central Arkansas Water.)

I do think that one or two of the proposed areas in the Alternative A plan should also be given more consideration.

Finally, I understand that these proposed sites are not being sold to any company - that the land will still remain public property. If, however, I misunderstand and these sites are to be sold (no longer to be public property), then I am, indeed, against this.