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First name: JACK

Last name: PERLMAN

Organization:

Title:

Comments: June 18, 2026

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Jack Perlman. I am an 80-year-old United States Navy veteran, a retired Suffolk County Police Officer, a homeowner, and an American citizen who values the preservation of our nation's public lands. I am writing to strongly object to the proposed leasing of parcels within the Routh National Forest for oil and gas development.

America's national forests were established to serve the public interest. These lands were set aside and protected so that future generations could benefit from clean water, wildlife habitat, recreation, natural beauty, and healthy ecosystems. They are among the few places that belong equally to every American, regardless of wealth or status.

The value of these lands cannot be measured solely in dollars. Once roads are cut, drilling pads are built, equipment is moved in, and industrial activity begins, the character of the land is permanently altered. While companies may profit from development, the public often bears the long-term costs through habitat loss, degraded scenery, increased traffic, noise, pollution risks, and reduced recreational opportunities.

National forests provide benefits that extend far beyond their boundaries. They protect watersheds, support fish and wildlife populations, provide outdoor recreation, contribute to tourism economies, and preserve landscapes that many Americans consider part of our national heritage. These values should not be sacrificed for short-term commercial gain.

I believe that public lands should be managed first for conservation, stewardship, recreation, wildlife protection, and the long-term interests of the American people. Industrial development should not be allowed to undermine the very purposes for which these lands were protected.

I am also concerned about the cumulative effect of continued development on public lands throughout the country. Each individual project may be presented as limited in scope, but the combined impact of repeated leasing and development can gradually erode the integrity of our public lands and the protections that generations of Americans worked to establish.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Forest Service to reject this proposal and maintain the protections currently afforded to these lands. The long-term public value of preserving these forests far outweighs any temporary economic benefits that may be gained from leasing them for oil and gas development.

Finally, I wish to include a personal opinion. I am concerned that public opposition to this proposal may ultimately receive little consideration. I personally believe that the current administration is strongly committed to expanding oil and gas development on public lands and may proceed with such projects regardless of the level of public objection. Whether others agree with my assessment or not, I believe it is important that this concern be included in the public record and that decision-makers demonstrate that citizen comments are genuinely considered before actions affecting public lands are approved.

Please accept this letter as my formal objection to the proposed leasing action.

Respectfully,

Jack Perlman?Alexander County, North Carolina?U.S. Navy Veteran?Retired Suffolk County Police Officer