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Title:

Comments: I am writing in opposition to the plan to open areas of the Ouachita National Forest to mining for crystal. As a person who has enjoyed all that the Ouachita forest has to offer for the better part of my life, I find it offensive that we would open up our shared resources for the exploitation and enrichment of a few.

The reason that these areas were preserved was so that we would all have a common space, where Americans of all walks of life could enjoy the bountiful gifts of the land we inhabit. For the government to turn around and lease it to the highest bidder and befoul not only the area to be mined, but also the surrounding areas with noise and light pollution, and threaten the water resources that so many of the surrounding communities depend on is a grave betrayal of the public trust.

Once an area is disturbed by this level of encroachment, it is never truly returned to its natural state, and all too often the companies responsible for the reforestation disappear under the cover of bankruptcy. The process of mining is one of the most rapacious abuses of land, and should never be allowed in our National Forests.