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Comments

I am Rodney Thomas, age 42, residing in Hiawassee, GA. In the area I reside in, the Chattahoochee National Forest makes up a high percentage of the land. Being an avid outdoorsmen, I have noticed the decline in wildlife on the National Forest that depends on clear-cuts for browse (food) and nesting. In these areas, deer, grouse, and turkey numbers have declined due to no timber management. These species thrive in areas that provide natural food sources and nesting areas. Without timber management, you have large areas of the forest that have canopy closure which limits sunlight to the forest floor. I have heard numerous complaints from residents who enjoy the sport of hunting on National Forest lands. People have stopped visiting the forests for these reasons which takes dollars away from business' that depend on sporting goods sales.

From an economic viewpoint, the small towns of North Georgia, such as Hiawassee, Clayton, and Blairsville Georgia, could use the various jobs that timber management creates. There is even a Biomass Electric Generating plant in Rabun Gap, Georgia that could turn insect infested timber into Green Energy. None of this is possible however, unless the forests are managed in a responsible manner unlike the "NO MANAGEMENT" approach that has taken place the last several years. I am a tax paying citizen of the United States and I would like to see changes in the way our National Forests are managed.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Rodney L. Thomas

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