

August 31, 2009

David K. Baker
US Army Corps of Engineers
151 Patton Avenue, Room 208
Asheville, NC 28801-5006

Dear Sir:

The proposal of the North Carolina DOT to build a 4 lane highway to interstate standards in Graham County, NC from Robbinsville to Stecoah has major flaws. I have not seen any alternative suggestions; particularly lacking is a possible plan to improve the current highway to meet the needs of the people of Graham County. To build a 4 lane highway to interstate standards in this rugged mountainous area would be disastrous to the watersheds of this area. Major cuts through these mountains likely would add to slope instability and may contribute major stream pollution from acidic release from pyritic rock. Addition problems are created when the pollution from highways enter our water supply.

When huge cuts are made in mountains, the water run-off patterns change. Here in Rabun County, GA, the continental divide at Mountain City is only one such divide along these mountains. A bull dozer cutting through the wrong area can change the flow of streams from the Atlantic to the Gulf. With the current water wars of the Deep South, the last thing we need is water diverted from its natural flow pattern to another completely different watershed.

This highway is unneeded; it would not improve the driving time, and instead of improving economic conditions it would damage the tourist based economy of the area. The environmental damage that the proposed highway would do to this pristine area is beyond description. I would hope that my grandchildren will be able to hike the Appalachian Trail without a four-lane highway ruining the view and the peace and quiet of the area.

Fresh clean water is one of our major assets in the Southern Appalachians. Please protect this asset by denying the NC DOT permission to build this highway.

Sincerely,

Lucy E. Bartlett

P. O. Box 264
Tiger, GA 20576