

TOM HOFFMAN

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August 20, 2009

Dave Baker  
Asheville Regulatory Field Office  
151 Patton Avenue  
Room 208,  
Asheville, NC 28801

Re: Corridor K between Robbinsville and Stecoah NC

Dear Mr. Baker:

I wish to strenuously protest the construction of the above-referenced highway. It would wreak severe damage on the fragile environment of the mountains of western North Carolina. The road would adversely affect a dozen streams and wetlands, both during construction of the project and after completion. Oil and gasoline runoff would pollute these streams and poison the drinking water of people in the area. Many, if not most, species of fish would be killed. Portions of some streams would have to be rechanneled into concrete ditches for drainage purposes.

I also find it very disturbing that some engineers feel that an open cut will need to be used instead of a tunnel under Stecoah Gap and the Appalachian Trail. A cut would do far more damage to the environment than a tunnel would. For example, it would aggravate the problem of releasing acidic rock, which would then flow into nearby streams.

Finally, this road would cost anywhere from \$334 million to \$383 million. Graham County is sparsely populated with very little traffic on the existing roads. Both state and federal budgets are stressed because of decreased tax revenue due to the recession. It would be far more economical and less damaging to the environment to upgrade the existing roads.

Please enter my comments into the official record.

Sincerely,

Tom Hoffman