



Georgia's roadless areas are under threat.

What is the Roadless Rule?

Since 2001, the Roadless Rule has protected nearly 45 million acres of America's wildest public lands from unnecessary roadbuilding, harmful development, and destructive logging projects. It is one of America's most important bipartisan conservation achievements and the result of record-breaking public support.

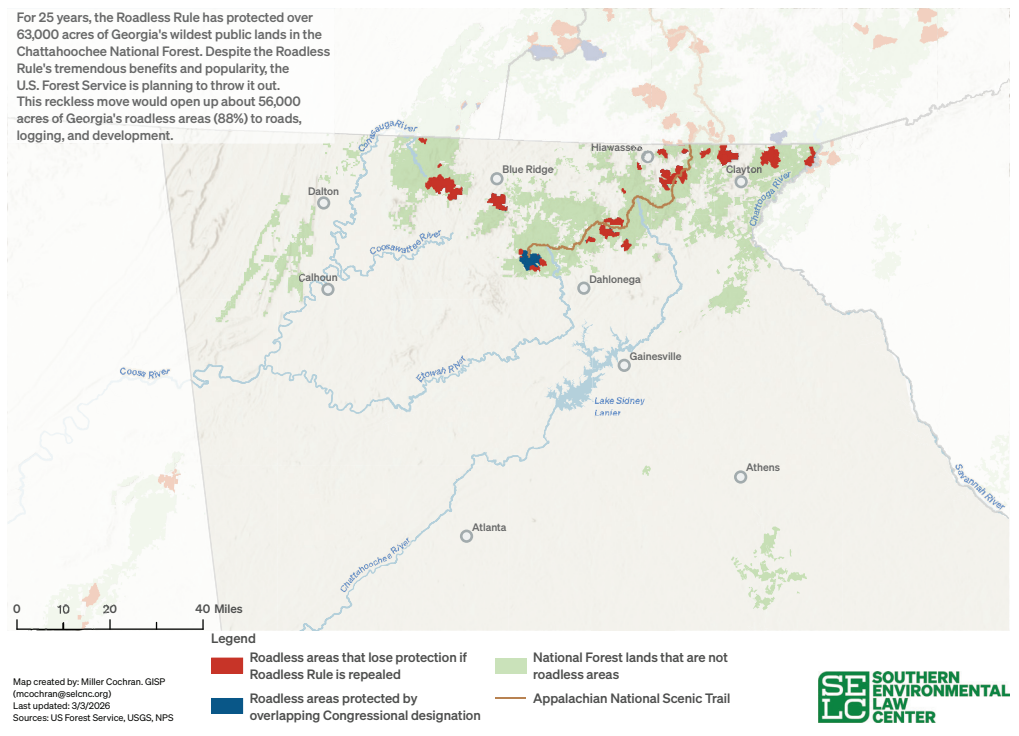
Threats to Georgia's Roadless Areas

The Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests are home to over 63,000 roadless acres in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Georgia. These roadless areas provide irreplaceable benefits to Georgians — clean drinking water, access to wild places, vital support for local economies, and essential wildlife habitat.

Despite the Roadless Rule's tremendous benefits and broad, bipartisan support for the rule across Georgia, the U.S. Forest Service is working to throw it out. This reckless and unnecessary move would open up 56,000 roadless acres in Georgia (88%) to logging and development — putting Georgia's roadless areas at risk, as well as the millions of Georgians who rely on them.

Georgia Roadless Areas Under Threat

For 25 years, the Roadless Rule has protected over 63,000 acres of Georgia's wildest public lands in the Chattahoochee National Forest. Despite the Roadless Rule's tremendous benefits and popularity, the U.S. Forest Service is planning to throw it out. This reckless move would open up about 56,000 acres of Georgia's roadless areas (88%) to roads, logging, and development.



Georgia's Roadless Areas by the Numbers

- **3.3 million+** Georgians get drinking water from roadless area watersheds
- **3 million** visitors to the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests in 2019, with most seeking out undeveloped areas (70%)
- **40+** at-risk species with habitat in Georgia's roadless areas, including the Eastern Hellbender, Etowah Darter fish, and Georgia Pigtoe mussel

How the Roadless Rule Benefits Georgia Communities

- Many of Georgia's most special rivers — including the Chattahoochee, Chattooga, Conasauga, Coosawattee, Oostanaula, Etowah, and Coosa Rivers — have headwaters in roadless areas.
- Roadless areas contribute to clean drinking water for 3.3+ million Georgians in nearby communities like Chatsworth, Ellijay, Blairsville, and Hiawassee, as well as downstream areas like metro Atlanta, Rome, Augusta, and Savannah.
- Whether mountain biking in Mountaintown, trout fishing in the crystal-clear streams of Kelly Ridge, or hiking the Appalachian or Benton MacKaye Trail from Lance Creek, Georgia's roadless areas offer world-class recreation.
- Georgia's national forests are powerful economic drivers for local communities, with recreation in the lead. In 2019, recreation supported 1,560 local jobs and contributed \$101 million to local economies — 78% of the forests' total contributions, including those from timber.
- Roadless areas are crucial for backcountry hunters and anglers. Hunting and fishing are not only a part of Georgia's heritage — they're a major contributor to Georgia's economy, with a combined \$5.2 billion in annual direct expenditures.
- Georgia's roadless areas are a haven for wildlife like black bear, deer, wild turkey, grouse, and hundreds of bird species, as well as 40+ at-risk species.
- The Roadless Rule is fire smart. It permits the Forest Service to both reduce wildfire risk and fight wildfires in roadless areas. Since most wildfires start within 50 yards of a road, building roads into new areas would increase fire risk.
- Rescinding the Roadless Rule to build more roads would be an irresponsible use of taxpayer dollars. The Forest Service already has a staggering \$9 billion maintenance backlog on its sprawling road system, which is double the size of the U.S. highway system.



What are Georgians saying about the Roadless Rule?

"I grew up on 100 acres of land off a dirt road close to the Chattahoochee River. I treasure being able to find a spot where there is no road noise, no shrieking sirens, and no lawnmowers to interrupt the sound of birds, wind, and water. There is not enough space left for the average person to find peace. We can ill afford to lose what little we have left."

— PAULDING COUNTY

"These wild places are so important for all of our futures. We must preserve [them] for the future generations."

— RABUN COUNTY

"We don't need more roads. The Forest Service can't keep up the roads they already have."

— GILMER COUNTY



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LAW
CENTER
selc.org

For more information, contact

Eric Hilt
Senior Communications Manager
ehilt@selc.org

To support the Roadless Rule, visit
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