



# North Carolina'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.

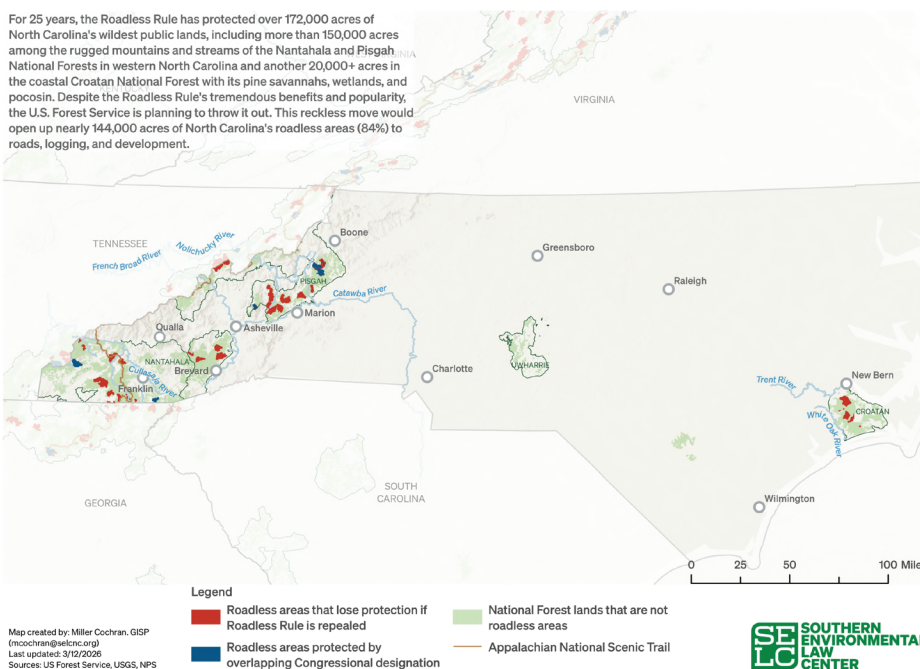
## Threats to North Carolina's Roadless Areas

In North Carolina, the Roadless Rule protects over 172,000 acres — mostly in the rugged mountains of the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests, but also 20,000 acres in the pine savannas and pocosin of the coastal Croatan National Forest. These roadless areas provide irreplaceable benefits: world-class hiking and mountain biking trails, clean drinking water, crystal-clear trout streams, vital support for local economies, and essential wildlife habitat.

Despite the Roadless Rule's tremendous benefits and broad, bipartisan support — in North Carolina and across the country — the U.S. Forest Service is working to throw it out. This unnecessary move would open up nearly 144,000 roadless acres in North Carolina (84%) to logging and development.

## North Carolina Roadless Areas Under Threat

For 25 years, the Roadless Rule has protected over 172,000 acres of North Carolina's wildest public lands, including more than 150,000 acres among the rugged mountains and streams of the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forests in western North Carolina and another 20,000+ acres in the coastal Croatan National Forest with its pine savannas, wetlands, and pocosin. 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 nearly 144,000 acres of North Carolina's roadless areas (84%) to roads, logging, and development.



## North Carolina's Roadless Areas by the Numbers

- **143,972 roadless acres at risk if the Roadless Rule is rescinded**
- **2 million+ North Carolinians get drinking water from roadless area watersheds**
- **\$2.53 billion in revenue from recreational activities reliant on North Carolina's roadless areas**
- **12,800+ jobs supported by roadless area recreation in North Carolina**
- **50 at-risk species with habitat in North Carolina's roadless areas, including the eastern hellbender, Neuse River waterdog, and red-cockaded woodpecker**

## How the Roadless Rule Benefits North Carolina Communities

- Western North Carolina's booming outdoor recreation economy depends on roadless areas, which are home to the region's most notable climbing routes, whitewater paddling runs, and mountain bike trails. These three activities alone bring \$83.3 million in visitor spending and \$31.7 million in resident spending to Western North Carolina every year, while supporting 1,018 full-time jobs.
- Roadless areas contribute to clean drinking water for over 2 million North Carolinians in nearby communities like Murphy, Hendersonville, and Morganton, as well as downstream areas like Charlotte.
- Roadless areas are crucial for backcountry hunters and anglers and provide habitat for many of the state's remaining native brook trout populations. Trout fishing is not only a part of North Carolina's history — it's a major contributor to North Carolina's economy, providing \$1.38 billion annually and more than 11 thousand jobs for the state.
- Roadless areas provide important habitat for the plants and animals that make North Carolina so special, like the wood thrush, red-cockaded woodpecker, brook trout, and the famous eastern hellbender.
- 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.



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ENVIRONMENTAL  
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CENTER  
selc.org

For more information, contact  
Eric Hilt  
Senior Communications Manager  
ehilt@selc.org

To support the Roadless Rule, visit  
[www.savetheroadlessrule.org](http://www.savetheroadlessrule.org)



## What are North Carolinians saying about the Roadless Rule?

**“I live adjacent to the Nantahala National Forest and hike its forests nearly every day. The forests protect the waterways and soils and provide the tourists with a playground where they make the livelihood of our mountain towns possible. Restaurants, overnight accommodations, guides, and many other businesses rely upon the tourist industry who come to see the forests.”**

— MACON COUNTY

**“As a holder of lifetime NC hunting and fishing licenses, a longtime hiker, and a mountain biker, I have spent many days in NC's national forest roadless areas. I know firsthand how important the roadless rule is to our local economies, our ability to have some of the best hunting and fishing in the nation here in NC, and for our future generations. The roadless rule to me means my sons — and their children — will be able to enjoy the same hunting, fishing and recreational experiences I have been blessed with for so many years.”**

— ORANGE COUNTY