

Draft Report
RESPONSE TO COMMENTS
Content Analysis of Comments
Union County Target Range EA
Blue Ridge Ranger District, Chattahoochee-Oconee National
Forests
Public Comments
Comments received during scoping period (10/12/2018 to
11/13/2018).



Response to Comment (By Author)

Project: Union County Target Range Project (54559)

Comment Period: Scoping -

Period Dates: 10/12/2018 - 11/11/2018

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Author(s)	Comment	Response
Ackerman, Pamela	I support the target range for Union County, because it will offer a safe, clean and educational place to shoot. This range will be offering educational programs for the youth. They can learn to handle and shoot firearms safely and prepare to compete in shooting matches for air guns and pellet rifles. I enjoy shooting and learning how to handle my fireman in a safe matter. I don't want to go and shoot just anywhere in the woods. We hear people shooting in the woods close to our neighbor and it makes me uncomfortable that they may hit a house or a person. Also, it would give the Blairsville Police Department and the Union County Sherriff Department a place for their officers to train and sharpen their skills.	Thank you for your comments.
Addeholdt, Jr., James D.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Assuming that members only of the UCTR will be using the facility, the land will no longer be open to the public.2. A precedent could be set for other organizations to seek permits on public land for their agenda.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Addeholdt, Jr., James D.	Noise pollution could affect the Appalachian Trail, which appears to be less than one mile south of the site.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.
Anon, Ann	I have read the other letters in opposition to the target range, and I would like to make a few points. Anyone that has ever spent much time on a target range will tell you, the wildlife get used to the range, and activity is often halted due to deer or bear wandering into the area.	The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range. Thank you for your comments.
Anon, Ann	As for safety, I would rather see a designated area for someone to shoot than to just pick a spot in the Forest, go out and shoot with no regard as to what is beyond their paper target. There are thousands of acres in the Forest and allowing a few to be used for the tax paying public that want to use it for something other than looking at trees, I am in support.	Thank you for your comments.
Anon, Anon	Great Idea. We fully support it!	Thank you for your comments.
Attkisson, Sylvia	Please do not put a Shooting Range in our National Forest!	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Attkisson, Sylvia	We do not need to hear gun shots in our National Forest. Which is, after all, supposedly for everyone.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.
Attkisson, Sylvia	Shooting range will be only for a limited number. OUR National Forest is NOT the place for something like this!!!	The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range. Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Azzarello, Charlie	I very strongly support the formation and operation of the Union County Gun Club and target range. This would be great for the community and would give residents a great place to go to learn how to use and operate firearms safely and properly.	Thank you for your comments.
Bagwell, Elizabeth	I think it's a great idea.	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Bailey, Perry	<p>I am opposed to the target range specifically over noise concerns.</p> <p>My neighbors and myself have fired 357 magnum revolver in the proposed</p> <p>Location with observers stationed outside our homes. This test resulted in all</p> <p>Observers hearing the shots fired. We have performed this test at different times</p> <p>Of the year with winter with leaves off the trees being the loudest.</p>	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Bailey, Perry	<p>The firing test today was conducted with firearms that were not the loudest to be allowed at the proposed range site. No observers were present on the AP trail during the test firing. I respectfully request that the firing test be scheduled again with larger caliber weapons magnum rifle and revolver ammunition.</p>	<p>Your request for information has been noted. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. A report from the two live firing test will be available in the project website.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Bailey, Perry & JoAnn	<p>After 20+ years of camping and riding motorcycles in this peaceful slice of Georgia, we bought our home on Jonas Mountain Road in 2013. We made a decision to completely change our hectic, traffic-filled, stressful life for a more peaceful life here in the edge of the Brasstown Wilderness. We searched for years for the perfect place. After a couple years of transitioning, we moved fulltime to Jonas Mountain in December 2015. We are not only avid campers and motorcyclists, but also gun-owners and enjoy shooting at our property in Alabama, as well as the Chatuge Gun Club. We adamantly oppose the proposed Target Range on Hwy 180. If the county wants a target range instead of using the Chatuge Gun Club, fine; however, we don't want it on our backyard!</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>
Bailey, Perry & JoAnn	<p>As for the talking points that were printed in the Notice of Public hearing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · It is unclear if/whether gunfire will be heard by nearby residents and users of the Forest - FALSE. · No noise information is included in the gun range proposal - OBVIOUSLY. · No formal gun-fire sound/noise studies have been conducted for the proposed site to date - FALSE. · Current significant gun-fire noise from an existing target site 0.9 mile distant from homes - FALSE. 	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Bailey, Perry & JoAnn	NOTE: noise level studies HAVE been conducted and we disagree with the statements above. The information you are relaying to the community is FALSE.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.
Bailey, Perry & JoAnn	<p>As for the issue of the Chatuge Gun Club Range:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Existing Chatuge Gun Club Range is 3.5 miles+/- distant from proposed site · Chatuge Gun Club is open to the public (non members) 1 Sunday afternoon per month · Chatuge Gun Club is reserved 2 mornings per month for law enforcement training/practice · Chatuge Gun Club has a declining membership · On recent visits, shooting stations were available 	<p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p> <p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.</p>
Bailey, Perry & JoAnn	My husband is a member of the Chatuge Gun Club. We go by the range many times a week and it is very often empty. Chatuge Gun Club has been suitable for Union County law enforcement for years. The fact that Chatuge Gun Club is no longer sufficient for Union County law enforcement and residents, gives the appearance that this entire proposal is an arrogant attempt for recognition on behalf of one or more county officials.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Barger, Janet	the location for the proposed range seems a poor choice, mainly because of its proximity to the heavily used Appalachian Trail (about 1/2 mile it appears).	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Barger, Janet	Hikers along the trail who may be unaware of the range will be frightened, let alone having the peace and solitude they are seeking so rudely interrupted. Not only that, I see on the map that another range is less than 5 miles away. If a new range is needed, and I am not sure it is as there are many locations in the area where one may shoot, why not locate it closer to an ORV trail where noise is already present and will not present a new problem	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Barkey, Mimi	There is already a shooting range close to this Project location.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Barkey, Mimi	In addition it is too close to the AT and Wilderness areas.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Barkey, Mimi	I oppose the Union County Target Range Project #54559	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Bernthal, Judy	It is my understanding that while Union County will be the permittee, control of this gun range will be turned over to a member-only private club. Since private operation creates the potential of restricted access by the general public, I am opposed to the project. The national forests belong to the people, and I don't think that there should any possible potential restriction on the use thereof	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Bernthal, Steve	It is my understanding that while Union County will be the permittee, control of this gun range will be turned over to a member-only private club. Since private operation creates the potential of restricted access by the general public, I am opposed to the project. The national forests belong to the people, and I don't think that there should any possible potential restriction on the use thereof.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Bernthal, Steve	I am opposed to this project. Having read up on the plan in our local paper, if this project is approved, the Union County Commissioner (petitioner for the project) intends to turn over control and operation of the gun range to a recently formed private gun club. Further, no mention has been made about the use of the range by non-members. If we have a gun range on federal government land, it's use should be made available to all citizens any time the range is open. The citizens own the forest, not private gun clubs. So, unless this issue is satisfactorily resolved, I am opposed.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Bianco, Roger Swiss	<p>I would like you to consider this: If we extend this to create a 1,000 yards / 1,000 meter range, we would then have the space and the longest range for public use.</p> <p>This capability would attract additional shooting sports-minded people to come and use the range. With a small amount of promotion and with long-range shooting being one of the fastest growth areas of the shooting sports, this could attract non-local people to our area and range. This will broaden the knowledge of our area and potentially bring additional commerce for lodging, food, and shopping.</p> <p>Please consider my proposal for a feasible range extension to 1,000 yards/1,000 meters.</p>	Thank you for your comment. Different alternatives will be evaluated in the Environmental Assessment.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Blue Ridge RD, Comment Inbox	<p>Dear Forest Stakeholder:</p> <p>You are receiving this email because you provided input on the proposal to authorize the Union County, Ga., government to construct a target range on National Forest System lands. One factor the USDA Forest Service will analyze for this proposal is the potential noise from gunfire and related effects in the surrounding area.</p> <p>A live-fire test will occur at the site on November 8, 2018, at approximately 8:30 a.m.</p> <p>Only authorized persons will be allowed admittance to the proposed range itself during the test for safety purposes. The test will allow local residents and stakeholders to experience potential noise effects in the vicinity of the proposed target range. The proposed site for this project is located off Highway 180 between mile markers 18 and 19 on Land lot 212, District 16, Section 1 south of FS Road 292 and consists of approximately 15 acres of National Forest land.</p>	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Bonner, Cynthia	Dear Management, Please reconsider this project. The Appalachian Trail is a valuable recreation resource which hikers all over the country enjoy. This project is too close to the trail. Not only will the forest be disturbed by the sounds of guns but you run a risk if a hiker gets off the trail	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Bonner, Phillip	Aside from noise pollution	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Bonner, Phillip	the proximity to hiking trails poses a potential danger to hikers, especially those who may wander off course	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Bonner, Phillip	With another target range only 3.5 miles away from the proposed range, the need for this new range is very questionable.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Bonner, Phillip	I am not in favor of the Union County Target Range.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Booher, Sam	I see no problem building the Union County Target Range once it is confirmed by the Range Site Plan that all target shooting is at targets located in the opposite direction of any part of the Appalachian trail and any Public Trail in range of any high Powered Rifle.	Thank you for your comments.
Boone, Joe	First, you have the acknowledged noise associated with an open firing range. It may tolerable, but it is unexpected in a wilderness setting and defeats the solitude some are seeking.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Boone, Joe	Second, despite the safety berm around the site and ridge between it and the AT the site, I understand that it is still possible for a stray rifle bullet to reach the AT itself.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Boone, Joe	Third, I understand that the initial plan for a 200 yd rifle range is only considered a first step to lengthening this range. Does this mean higher powered guns with a longer range are in the plans?	Thank you for your comments.
Boone, Joe	Finally, many gun ranges are enclosed, which reduced the noise to the area. Surely it would not be that much more costly to enclose these ranges given that berms and partial enclosure is already being planned. Then the range could be lengthened and more high powered guns might be used with little more noise impact than the 200yd range, but with less chance of unintentionally striking someone around the AT in a wilderness area.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Brooker, Robert	I am in favor of the establishment of the range at the designated location as it would provide residents of the county a safe area to learn and practice firearm safety. Currently there are no ordinances that restrict firearm discharge on unincorporated private county land which could lead to unintended consequences. Having this location approved would enable enhanced community awareness and firearm safety	Thank you for your comments.
Brooks, Elizabeth	The forest is a terrible place to locate a shooting range. All gun ranges have the potential for anyone on the range or near the range to be shot accidentally. This type of accident happens at gun ranges.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Brooks, Elizabeth	This is the absolutely worst place to locate a gun range. I urge you to cancel any further consideration of this absurd proposal	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Brooks, Elizabeth	The loud noise of discharged guns will be an ongoing nuisance to all of the wildlife and to anyone who has entered the forest area to enjoy the peace and quiet of the woods. The sound of gunshots is always disturbing.	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors noise, anticipated effects to wildlife and threatened/endangered plant and animal species.</p> <p>Concerns regarding wildlife. This is not a key issue because it is not supported by scientific research (Larkin, 1996, Doresky, et al., 2001). Most research on sound impacts to wildlife has addressed issues in aquatic environments, especially as they affect wildlife behavior and communication. Doresky, et al. (2001), however, report that federally-endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers exhibit no response to training activities, including gunfire, on a military base. Based on these studies and experience with other public shooting facilities, the Forest Service concludes that some wildlife species would acclimate to the new conditions and others would adjust by avoiding the area when users are present and that the range would not have an appreciably negative impact on wildlife.</p>

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Brooks, Elizabeth	How do you propose to evaluate the effect on the local wildlife? This outdoor gun-range project can certainly NOT be good for the animals in the habitats near this range. The sound of gunshots is disturbing enough to humans. Imagine the effects on animals whose hearing is orders of magnitudes more sensitive than the hearing of humans.	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors noise, anticipated effects to wildlife and threatened/endangered plant and animal species.</p> <p>Concerns regarding wildlife. This is not a key issue because it is not supported by scientific research (Larkin, 1996, Doresky, et al., 2001). Most research on sound impacts to wildlife has addressed issues in aquatic environments, especially as they affect wildlife behavior and communication. Doresky, et al. (2001), however, report that federally-endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers exhibit no response to training activities, including gunfire, on a military base. Based on these studies and experience with other public shooting facilities, the Forest Service concludes that some wildlife species would acclimate to the new conditions and others would adjust by avoiding the area when users are present and that the range would not have an appreciably negative impact on wildlife.</p>
Brooks, Elizabeth	to prevent the lead dispersal that will be created by this gun range, the range should be indoors, fully enclosed, with proper lead abatement air filters and noise reduction systems. Local residents can hear the noise, but they will not be aware of their own lead exposure.	If the proposed action is selected, an Environmental Stewardship Plan will be developed that contains an action plan and best management practices for managing lead accumulation, abatement and removal. Based on similar action plans implemented at Forest Service Target Ranges within the region and others located within the state, lead management procedures have worked as intended.
Brown, Max	This shooting range is a bad idea. There is another one close by.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Brown, Max	There are splendid trails and wilderness areas near by that should be maintained and preserved as is. Those needs are greater than the need for a redundant gun facility.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Brown, Susan	Please do not build this Shooting Range in Union County only 1 mile from the Appalachian Trail and Brasstown areas.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Brown, Susan	The noise would be an unfortunate interruption to for those who head into our forests for peace, quiet and the sound of nature (not guns.)	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Bullivant, Drexel	I am totally for building a 200 yard rifle - pistol range in Union County, Georgia. There are multiple reasons for supporting its construction.	Thank you for your comments.
Bullivant, Drexel	Safety is of primary importance. I live in the county and periodically hear people shooting nearby on private property. A properly engineered accessible range would provide these people with a truly safe place to shoot. I would be happy to have a local range available to go to.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Bullivant, Drexel	Local law enforcement needs a range to be able to remain qualified to handle firearms. The longest range I know of within even a one hour drive is only 100 yards in length.	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
	<p>SWAT teams need longer ranges to truly hone their skills.</p>	
	<p>Our youth need activities available to prepare them for safe firearms handling and possibly to serve our country in our armed services. The FFA, Boy Scouts, etc. have shooting programs and can earn badges to show their achievement in this area.</p>	
	<p>Women in particular can benefit from learning the proper handling of firearms. They need to be able to defend themselves from potential criminal activity.</p>	
	<p>There are health benefits to be derived from the discipline and coordination required to target shoot. Target shooting has been proven to be a stress reliever. Disabled persons can engage in shooting sports on an equal footing with all others. It is a real confidence builder.</p>	
	<p>Many military veterans live in our county and still want to maintain their skill level. As a group they make up a very loyal and patriotic segment of the county population and are willing</p>	

Author(s)	Comment	Response
	to step in during emergency situations. I have seen veteran groups feeding people during natural disasters, using their military skills to remove rubble and to rebuild.	
Bullivant, Sharon	I am sure that I have not covered all of the benefits to be derived from a shooting range but these speak for themselves. I support building a rifle and pistol range in Union County. It is a great resource for women who need training in the proper handling of firearms. Our youth as well as retired people can benefit from the training and recreational opportunities a range would make available to them. Our local law enforcement agencies could also utilize it to hone their skills.	Thank you for your comments.
Burnette, Monica	This project has my 100% support. Please do not consider building this gun range in such a pristine area and so close to recreation areas. There is another range close by, and I do not believe this is needed.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Bustillo, Roberto	How come they didn't build want to build this target range at the last chosen spot to build that was rejected because there was a \$300,000 dollar house built there, but now they want to bring down my property value and all of us on 180 with this target range.	The Forest Service has previously conducted a review of scientific literature and could not find research that provides a statistically valid link between shooting ranges and property values that supports the statement of negative affects.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Bustillo, Roberto	Also teddy Roosevelt when he set aside land,for a national Forrest did not intend for it to be,used for private recreation uses. This land was to be preserved throughout the generations to be enjoyed as the wilderness it is.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Callahan, Rebecca	Strongly object to the Shooting Range in Union County #54559.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Callahan, Rebecca	There is no place for a range so close to the trail or in the forest where all seek quiet. There are plenty of shooting ranges about in this area and this is a boondoggle for the County.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Callison, Jim	Re. the Union County Target Range, please deny it.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Callison, Jim	People shooting so close to nearby trails would ruin the experience of hikers in the area & could possibly subject them to the dangers of stray bullets.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Callison, Jim	Too much noise & possible danger means a range like this should be located far away from hiking trails, especially popular ones	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.

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Caster, Susan	Please do not build the Union County Target Range	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Caster, Susan	It is not necessary when there is already a range 3.5 miles away.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Caster, Susan	The noise will negatively impact surrounding areas.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Chambers, Henry	I am totally against any additional gun range within the Blue Ridge District.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Chambers, Henry	There is an existing range less than 5 miles away, just off of GA 180.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.

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Chambers, Henry	These are public lands and the general public is not welcome to use these lands except one day a month under conditions dictated by a private interest! The area proposed is a wildlife opening, one of less than half dozen in the immediate area (5 miles). The existing range can be opened for law enforcement training through the week, as most gun club and other use is on the weekends. There is no point in duplication and there are other ranges available, one in Cherokee County, NC that is specifically a law enforcement training area that is less than 30 minutes away.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Chedwick, Mike	I oppose the building of a target range on these forest lands. I visit this area to escape and enjoy the natural sounds of the forest.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Chedwick, Mike	I also believe that this organization could easily find a location on non forest property.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Chism, Billy	I object to the proposed gun target range in Union County due to it proximity of the Appalachian Trail National Park.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Chism, Billy	I understand the sounds of a gun range can reach several miles, depending on the gun, and this target range would be less than one mile from the AT and even closer to two U.S. Forest Wilderness Areas where people hike and camp.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Chism, Billy	This is a safety issue, but even more, it is a sound issue. My wife and I hiked the entire Georgia section of the AT after I retired. It took us a long time, but nothing could have been more satisfying and relaxing. Each time we hiked, we marveled at the quietness, when you could hear a squirrel rustling through the leaves or a quiet birdsong. Our children have hiked this quiet wonder, and we want our grandchildren and others to have this honor. Please consider the many who want peace and quiet along the AT, as well as these Wilderness Areas.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Chmiel, Ronald	I support the re-location of the target range to GA Hwy 180 in Union County.	Thank you for your comments.
Chu, Terri	I highly doubt another shooting range is needed in this forest area when one already exists within a 5 mile drive.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Chu, Terri	I imagine the hikers and campers nearby may be startled by sounds of gunfire. Keep the forests natural so we can best enjoy them and the sounds that they produce	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Clark, Paul	<p>Why a Target Range here?</p> <p>Okay, so we have considered all the legal requirements for starting a Target Range. We found that we had a lot of people interested in forming a Gun Club and acquiring a Target Range for our Union County community. We began an arduous task of looking for available land any and everywhere in Union County. Flat land in Union county is a premium commodity and is either too expensive or not in a convenient location for a Target Range.</p>	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
	<p>We took our search further by analyzing what we could find in our community that was far enough away from people's homes and other public activities as to not to cause excessive noise-interference nor encroach on other people's rights to recreational ventures such as hiking, fishing, and yes, even site seeing. We found a suitable piece of US property on highway 180 over a mile from the nearest home and far enough away from all trails used by hikers in our area as to pose no annoying acoustic interference in their enjoyment of our mutually owned US Forest Service Property. Further, there would be no new homes that could or would be built any closer than they already were.</p>	
	<p>The security situation in our country has caused a lot of people to become security conscious and resorting to means to protecting themselves and their families. While a gun club and Target Range will not provide people with the needed security, it would provide a place where people can learn about guns and how to protect themselves if need be...by practicing their aim and a Target Range with Range Safety Officers will help to ensure their safety while shooting.</p>	
	<p>The Gun Club's Target Range also provides a place where security agents and law enforcement agents can go to practice in order to serve our society and community better. A Gun Club and Target Range are therefore worth the efforts to come to fruition.</p>	
	<p>Our proposed location on Highway 180 between mile markers 18 and 19 is not only strategic but conducive to all our various participants as outlined above. Our chosen location is easily accessible and yet out of the way and obscure for the most</p>	

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Collins, David	<p>part as to not draw excessive attention away from the beautiful scenic areas immediate adjacent to the proposed Target Range Location. There is a proposed 150+ feet tree-line barrier between Highway 180 and the parking lot and Target Range so as to keep the Target Range from being easily seen from the road. If one would stand, for any length of time from morning till evening, alongside the road in this area you will notice that very few vehicles are traveling slow enough to observe the scenery---most are in a hurry to get somewhere else.</p> <p>I have said all that to say this...I am in favor of the Target Range Location.</p> <p>The proposed target range would be a great idea for residents of Union County. I have pistols and rifles that need to be sighted in and need to be used so that I know they are in good working order. Having a safe properly managed facility seems like the best way to be sure your weapons are in good working order.I am under the impression that personnel at the facility would be NRA certified and well schooled in safety procedures and shooting skills that even ex-military men like myself need to be refreshed on.Additional safety training is always a good idea.I am also sure my neighbors would appreciate that I am doing target practice at a designated safe target range rather than my backyard.I also want to thank the Forres Service for considering this facility on their managed property.</p>	Thank you for your comments.
Collins, FC & Shelley	Regarding the proposed gun range off of Ga Highway 180, I would like to voice my opposition.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Collins, FC & Shelley	<p>While not opposed to a gun range in Union County, I do oppose this particular location. I was born (1935) and raised in the close-by Arkaqua area of Union County and have owned a cattle farm and resided off of Hwy 180 in the Choestoe area for nearly 60 years. The natural beauty of the area, along with my heritage, has always been cherished. My family, friends and I have hiked and ridden horseback over the area of this proposed project, as well as countless miles surrounding, for well over 70 years. Likewise, my parents, grandparents and generations prior, dating back to one of Union County's earliest settlers, Thompson Collins in 1834, enjoyed the natural beauty, peace and quiet that first brought us here.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Collins, FC & Shelley	<p>I fear this proposed project will destroy that peace and tranquility which my neighbors and I currently enjoy.</p> <p>I fear for the noise,</p>	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Collins, FC & Shelley	<p>I fear that I can no longer hike or ride horses or drive my mule team by wagon on the surrounding Forest Service roads as before, due to the frightening of our animals.</p>	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Collins, FC & Shelley	it most will chase away beautiful native animals, simply from the noise generated.	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors noise, anticipated effects to wildlife and threatened/endangered plant and animal species.</p> <p>Concerns regarding wildlife. This is not a key issue because it is not supported by scientific research (Larkin, 1996, Doresky, et al., 2001). Most research on sound impacts to wildlife has addressed issues in aquatic environments, especially as they affect wildlife behavior and communication. Doresky, et al. (2001), however, report that federally-endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers exhibit no response to training activities, including gunfire, on a military base. Based on these studies and experience with other public shooting facilities, the Forest Service concludes that some wildlife species would acclimate to the new conditions and others would adjust by avoiding the area when users are present and that the range would not have an appreciably negative impact on wildlife.</p>
Collins, FC & Shelley	It disturbs me that this is being considered for an area of land in close proximity to the Appalachian Trail, Brasstown Bald and Richard Russell Scenic Highway, already well traveled but at least relatively quiet when compared to that of a gun range. Surely this cannot be considered good for established tourism in Union County	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Collins, FC & Shelley	and will, in fact, devalue both land and tourism if permitted to proceed.	The Forest Service has previously conducted a review of scientific literature and could not find research that provides a statistically valid link between shooting ranges and property values that supports the statement of negative affects.
Collins, FC & Shelley	It seems that out of the hundreds of thousands of acres in Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest alone, a more remote location could be found, which would not be so close to established homes, farms, small businesses and tourist areas.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Collins, Robert	Will the proposed Union County Traget Range be open to the public or will it require membership through a club?	Thank you for your comments.
Collins, troy	I live close to the half mile point and would have to listen to the noise all the time deminshing my families quality of life, devaluing my property value. I will be seeking legal action if this moves forward.	The Forest Service has previously conducted a review of scientific literature and could not find research that provides a statistically valid link between shooting ranges and property values that supports the statement of negative affects.
Collins, troy	I believe that the facility would have a permanent negative impact on other users nearby, including hunters, hikers, and those exploring the nearby Wilderness Areas. Due to the location, the negative impacts would be hard to mitigate.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Collins, troy	I do support & encourage shooting & range use in the National Forest, but the nearby Chatuge Gun Club is already well-established and in a better location to serve shooting range demand.	Thank you for your comments.
Collins, troy	Please reject the plan as proposed and work with the end-users (rather than the county government) to find a more appropriate solution.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Collins, Troy	Jerome I left u two voice mail this morning I haven't received anything back.	Thank you for your comments.
Colpo, Gregory	We don't need more sounds of WAR in our mountains. Indoor target ranges are enough, and they are safer than open ranges. Parents don't want to bring their children to tourist areas to be scared by gunfire.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Colpo, Gregory	The noise will chase away wild life, that is what you hope to see while hiking.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Colpo, Gregory	I think it all about gun clubs making money, but it won't be enough to take care of the loss of tourist money coming to the area. Has anyone thought about our veterans that use the trails to find peace and quite away from the war they lived in for months.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Colpo, Gregory	I live in the mountains were we have homes close by, but there is still gunfire nearby. One of my neighbors pulled a bullet out of the side of his house next to a picture window, when he was doing some painting. Not everyone knows gun safety.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Colpo, Gregory	My first concern is that national land is for everyone ,not just gun club members.Union county is leasing the people's land to a private club, (members only).I think there is room for legal challenge, because of national land use. Second , if local government would outlaw back yard taget practice, there may be a good reason for gun clubs. As we all know the number of gun clubs already in operation, has not stoped the danger of gun fire in residensial areas,(5 acres or less).My own home was hit my New Years gun fire a few years ago. Fortunately it did not go thru a window where I was sleeping.	<p>Goal 31 of the Forest Plan of Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests directs us to <i>"Provide a spectrum of high quality, nature-based recreation settings and opportunities that reflect the unique or exceptional resources of the Forest and the interests of the recreating public on an environmentally sustainable, financially sound, and operationally effective basis. Adapt management of recreation facilities and opportunities as needed to shift limited resources to those opportunities"</i>.</p> <p>Authorization of a target range facilities is consistent with Forest Service policy (FSM 2335.4) when the use is 1) consistent with Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and 2) when the authorization would enhance forest management by improving public safety, providing recreational opportunities and consolidating dispersed target shooting. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The environmental analysis will include consideration of factors like public safety, potential noise from gunfire, heritage resource sites, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Colpo, Gregory	Another question is are you going to shoot ONE round for the test?	Your request for information has been noted. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. A report from the two live firing test will be available in the project website.
Coppedge, Katherine	The gun range proposal is a BAD idea. It is too close to the AT and there is another range within 2.5 miles. Do a NANCY Reagan and just say NO!	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
CROSBY, Steven	I understand property owners adjacent to the proposed project were notified about the test shooting date. Knowing how sounds from the guns travel through the mountains, it would have been more valid if all property owners in a larger radius were notified,too.	Your request for information has been noted. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. A report from the two live firing test will be available in the project website.
CROSBY, Steven	I also object to federal lands being used for a private business within natural wildlife areas. Why do local tax dollars have to fund the construction and maintenance of a private club? You mention future expansions of the project, and it is not known at this time what the added expense to taxpayers will be.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Crosthwait, Shelly	I strongly oppose the proposed shooting range within the Chattahoochee National Forest.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Crosthwait, Shelly	This location is too close to the Appalachian trail, an area that should remain calm and serene, as opposed to the sounds of gunfire.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Crosthwait, Shelly	I agree with the 2nd amendment but this is far to code to hikers and dangerous.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Crosthwait, Shelly	I strongly oppose the proposed shooting range within the Chattahoochee National Forest.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Crosthwait, Shelly	This location is too close to the Appalachian trail, an area that should remain calm and serene, as opposed to the sounds of gunfire.	Thank you for your comments. The Environmental Assessment and Environment Stewardship Plan will assess impacts of the Russell-Brasstown National Scenic Byway.
Crosthwait, Shelly	I agree with the 2nd amendment but this is far to code to hikers and dangerous.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Davis, Donald	but we believe there are numerous problems with siting a target range at this location.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Davis, Donald	The construction and maintenance of the facility will likely cause harm to the soil and water quality at the site	Thank you for your comment. Alternative sites are being addressed. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, anticipated effects to soil, water, wildlife
Davis, Donald	potentially lower the overall recreational and scenic attributes of the surrounding area.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Davis, Donald	The Forest Service Must Evaluate Noise Impacts from the Proposed Target Range	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.
Davis, Donald	The Forest Service Must Assess Impacts on the Appalachian Trail	The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
		The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Davis, Donald	Minimizing noise levels on the Appalachian Trail is critical, especially for thru-hikers, who expect wilderness solitude as they travel northward toward North Carolina. In fact, the Georgia leg of the Appalachian Trail is often celebrated for the fact that it passes through nearly thirty miles of national forest wilderness, a distance exceeded nowhere else on the entire 2,200 mile route. The Forest Service must evaluate the degree Appalachian Trail hikers will be impacted by noise from the proposed shooting range.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Davis, Donald	The Forest Service Must Assess Impacts on the Adjacent Wilderness Areas	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Davis, Donald	North Georgia's Wilderness areas are national and local treasures, designated by Congress because they provide opportunities for remote recreation and quiet solitude in a natural setting--ever rarer and more valuable in our increasingly noisy world.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Davis, Donald	The Brasstown Bald Wilderness Area is 0.8 miles north of the proposed location, as its border reaches the headwaters of Indian Camp Creek. NEPA requires that the Forest Service consider the proposed shooting range's direct and indirect effects on these areas.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Davis, Donald	Because Wilderness areas are set aside, in part, for "solitude," consideration of noise impacts on the areas is critical.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Davis, Donald	The impacts on Wilderness may require preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). An EIS is required for all "major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Davis, Donald	Ultimately, the Forest Service must assess the degree of impact on the adjacent Wilderness. That may foreclose a Finding of No Significant Impact and demand preparation of an EIS.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Davis, Donald	The Wilderness Act separately demands that the agency consider the noise impacts of the shooting range on adjacent Wilderness areas.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Davis, Donald	The shooting range appears to trigger all of that factors the Izaak Walton court found were "more likely to degrade the wilderness character...and thus violate § 4(b)." Id. Noise from the shooting range will be substantially louder than present conditions; it will be more constant and frequent during hours the shooting range is in use; and it is of a different quality. While hunting is allowed in Wilderness areas, a shooting range produces sound of a substantially different quality than one or two people hunting in a Wilderness area. Sound from the shooting range will be concentrated, repetitive, loud, and possibly jarring to other users of the Wilderness areas.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Davis, Donald	We note that this proposed location for the shooting range risks unnecessary tradeoffs in the values national forests provide. There is no reason a shooting range could not be located in an area that will not potentially degrade the values of solitude, peace, and tranquility, provided by Wilderness areas. We ask that the agency look for better locations where the values associated with Wilderness and shooting ranges can both be fully accommodated.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Davis, Donald	The Forest Service Must Assess Impacts on the Russell-Brasstown National Scenic Byway	Thank you for your comments. The Environmental Assessment and Environment Stewardship Plan will assess impacts of the Russell-Brasstown National Scenic Byway.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Davis, Donald	The Forest Service Must Evaluate Impacts to Local Economies	Thank you for your comments. The project is consistent with the mission of the Forest Service. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety and noise on regards to impacts on local economies.
Davis, Donald	The Forest Service Must Evaluate and Disclose the Need for this Project	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Davis, Donald	One alternative the Forest Service should consider is amending the terms of the special use permit for the Chatuge Gun Club so it is open to the public more frequently, rather than constructing an entirely new gun range.	Thank you for your comment. Different alternatives will be evaluated in the Environmental Assessment.
Davis, Donald	Moreover, the Forest Service must look behind the statements of Gun Club members to accurately evaluate the need for a new shooting range in Union County. The question is whether there is a public need for a shooting range, not whether a private club would like one. Otherwise, need for shooting ranges could be continually established simply by forming new clubs that profess a need for their own shooting range. Related, the Forest Service should also consider how many members of the Union County Gun Club are also members of the Chatuge Gun Club.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Davis, Donald	Finally, as discussed elsewhere, the proposed location of the Union County shooting range may adversely impact user experience on the Appalachian Trail, Russel-Brasstown Scenic Byway, and in adjacent Wilderness areas. The Forest Service must evaluate whether there are alternative locations that are more suitable.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Davis, Donald	The Proposal May Not Comply With the Forest Plan	<p>Goal 31 of the Forest Plan of Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests directs us to <i>"Provide a spectrum of high quality, nature-based recreation settings and opportunities that reflect the unique or exceptional resources of the Forest and the interests of the recreating public on an environmentally sustainable, financially sound, and operationally effective basis. Adapt management of recreation facilities and opportunities as needed to shift limited resources to those opportunities"</i>.</p> <p>Authorization of a target range facilities is consistent with Forest Service policy (FSM 2335.4) when the use is 1) consistent with Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and 2) when the authorization would enhance forest management by improving public safety, providing recreational opportunities and consolidating dispersed target shooting. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The environmental analysis will include consideration of factors like public safety, potential noise from gunfire, heritage resource sites, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Davis, Donald	<p>All projects on a national forest must be consistent with the underlying forest plan. See 16 U.S.C. § 1604(i). The proposed shooting range is in Prescription 7.A "Scenic Byway Corridor," which is defined as "the area visible during the leaf-off season for up to one-half mile from either side of the road."^[12] Special uses, such as a shooting range, are only allowed in the prescription if they are "consistent and compatible with the goals and objectives of this area." Forest Plan Standard 7.A-001.</p>	<p>Goal 31 of the Forest Plan of Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests directs us to <i>"Provide a spectrum of high quality, nature-based recreation settings and opportunities that reflect the unique or exceptional resources of the Forest and the interests of the recreating public on an environmentally sustainable, financially sound, and operationally effective basis. Adapt management of recreation facilities and opportunities as needed to shift limited resources to those opportunities"</i>.</p> <p>Authorization of a target range facilities is consistent with Forest Service policy (FSM 2335.4) when the use is 1) consistent with Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and 2) when the authorization would enhance forest management by improving public safety, providing recreational opportunities and consolidating dispersed target shooting. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The environmental analysis will include consideration of factors like public safety, potential noise from gunfire, heritage resource sites, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Davis, Donald	<p>According to the Forest Plan, the area is to be managed to protect and showcase "the unique and scenic natural and cultural resources which were the basis for the corridor being designated as a scenic byway." [13] Even roads and trails within the area must "quickly enter and leave the seen area, and... not parallel the Byway." Forest Plan Standard 7.A-0015. At its proposed location, the Union County Target Range does not further the goals and objectives of the area, and if anything, will only increase traffic and cause drivers unwanted consternation. At its current proposed location, travelers will no doubt hear gunfire as they drive immediately past the facility, hardly the "desired condition" described in 2004 Management Plan. [14]</p>	<p>Goal 31 of the Forest Plan of Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests directs us to <i>"Provide a spectrum of high quality, nature-based recreation settings and opportunities that reflect the unique or exceptional resources of the Forest and the interests of the recreating public on an environmentally sustainable, financially sound, and operationally effective basis. Adapt management of recreation facilities and opportunities as needed to shift limited resources to those opportunities"</i>.</p> <p>Authorization of a target range facilities is consistent with Forest Service policy (FSM 2335.4) when the use is 1) consistent with Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and 2) when the authorization would enhance forest management by improving public safety, providing recreational opportunities and consolidating dispersed target shooting. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The environmental analysis will include consideration of factors like public safety, potential noise from gunfire, heritage resource sites, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Davis, Donald	<p>The Applicant Has Not Complied with the Agency's Special Use Authorization Requirements</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Davis, Donald	<p>Forest Service regulations define "group use" as "an activity conducted on National Forest System lands that involves a group of 75 or more people, either as participants or spectators." 36 C.F.R. § 251.51. A "commercial use or activity" is "any use or activity on National Forest System lands (a) where an entry or participation fee is charged, or (b) where the primary purpose is the sale of a good or service, and in either case, regardless of whether the use or activity is intended to produce a profit." Id. "Noncommercial uses" are those that do not mean the definition of commercial use. Id. Because the proposed shooting range will involve more than 75 people and its use is contingent on "payment of dues," it does not qualify as a "noncommercial group use." [15]</p>	Thank you for your comment.
Davis, Donald	<p>For commercial group uses, the special use applicant must provide "sufficient evidence...that the proponent has, or prior to commencement of construction will have, the technical and financial capability to construct, operate, maintain, and terminate the project for which an authorization is requested." 36 C.F.R. § 251.54(d)(3). The applicant does not appear to have complied with that requirement here.</p>	Thank you for your comment.
Davis, Donald	<p>In its special use application, Union County represents that it has the "financial background and available funding through SPLOST to supervise and assist with any necessary funding to supplement that of the Gun Club in construction of the necessary road access and parking as well as assisting in the grading for the gun range." [16] As we noted in an Oct. 23, 2018, letter to Commissioner Lamar Paris, SPLOST funding does not appear to be available for this project. [17] The Forest Service should ask the County to explain why it believes that funding is available.</p>	Thank you for your comment.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Davis, Donald	<p>The application also indicates that the County does not fully understand how much liability it is undertaking. The County has offered to "supplement" funding provided by the Gun Club but there is no indication as to how much funding the Gun Club intends to contribute.[18] With this and other ambiguities in the application and funding commitments of the two organizations, the Forest Service should request "a copy of the authorization under which the proposal is made" from the County. 36 C.F.R. § 251.54(d)(2)(ii). At the very least, the public should be made aware of what authority the County is operating under. Moreover, any agreement between the Gun Club and the County regarding cost-sharing should be disclosed to help the public better understand this project. If there is no cost-sharing agreement, that should be disclosed as well.</p>	<p>Goal 31 of the Forest Plan of Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests directs us to <i>"Provide a spectrum of high quality, nature-based recreation settings and opportunities that reflect the unique or exceptional resources of the Forest and the interests of the recreating public on an environmentally sustainable, financially sound, and operationally effective basis. Adapt management of recreation facilities and opportunities as needed to shift limited resources to those opportunities"</i>.</p> <p>Authorization of a target range facilities is consistent with Forest Service policy (FSM 2335.4) when the use is 1) consistent with Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and 2) when the authorization would enhance forest management by improving public safety, providing recreational opportunities and consolidating dispersed target shooting. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The environmental analysis will include consideration of factors like public safety, potential noise from gunfire, heritage resource sites, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Davis, Donald	<p>Taking the County's assertion that it has the financial capability to construct "the necessary road access and parking as well as assisting in the grading for the gun range" at face value, it still ignores other financial commitments associated with the proposal. The applicant must have the "financial capability to construct, operate, maintain, and terminate the project for which an authorization is requested." 36 C.F.R. § 251.54(d)(3) (emphasis added).</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. The project is consistent with the mission of the Forest Service. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety and noise on regards to impacts on local economies.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Davis, Donald	<p>There are numerous questions associated with the County's ability to operate, maintain and terminate the project. The County has requested that the special use authorization last for "a minimum of 100 years." [19] Is the County obligating itself to fund maintenance, including road maintenance, for the shooting range for the next century? What will that cost? Forest Service regulations also require that the County, as permit holder, submit an operating plan which must include a "provisions requiring that a safety evaluation of the target range be conducted at the [permit] holder's expense at least every five years." FSH 2709.14, Ch. 71.8. The County does not appear to have considered this, and other operational costs, associated with the shooting range and no party has indicated they are willing to take on that financial liability.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
Davis, Donald	<p>Georgia ForestWatch has specific concerns about lead contamination at the proposed location, an issue discussed at length in the 2011 Forest Service Handbook (Recreation Special Uses Handbook). [20] Not only does the Special Uses Handbook require target ranges on national forest lands to follow the EPA's Best Management Practices for Lead at Outdoor Shooting Ranges, it also requires the applicant to submit a safety plan (SP) and an environmental stewardship plan (ESP). [21] A U.S. Forest Service regional environmental engineer should also "review the ESP prior to acceptance by the agency," [22] a document that must contain the following information (which should also be disclosed in the agency's NEPA analysis):</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. Alternative sites are being addressed. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, anticipated effects to soil, water, wildlife</p>
Davis, Donald	<p>Discussion of the physical characteristics of the proposed range, including range size, soil pH, existence of wetlands, evidence of and potential for erosion in the area of proposed lead deposition, and other site specific factors that will affect design;</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. Alternative sites are being addressed. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, anticipated effects to soil, water, wildlife</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Davis, Donald	Operational characteristics, including expected use of the range, volume of lead accumulation, size of bullets to be used, shooting directions and patterns, and life expectancy of the range;	Thank you for your comment. Alternative sites are being addressed. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, anticipated effects to soil, water, wildlife
Davis, Donald	3. Design features and siting decisions aimed at preventing or minimizing the release of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants into the environment;	Thank you for your comment. Alternative sites are being addressed. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, anticipated effects to soil, water, wildlife
	4. Planned bullet and shot containment techniques;	
	5. Design or operating procedures to keep lead in the planned area of deposition and its metallic form;	
	6. Planned periodic recovery, reclamation, and recycling of spent ammunition and other substances, including availability of resources and cost to implement the proposal;	

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Davis, Donald	Noise control measures, such as siting, vegetative management, and engineering technology, and, where applicable, provisions for compliance with State and local law regarding noise control.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Davis, Donald	Lead also dissolves when it comes into contact with acidic water or soil and can migrate through the soil into groundwater and/or nearby streams. Acidic and more porous soils also increase the likelihood of soil and water contamination, which makes effective lead containment measures even more important. According to the EPA's Best Management Practices for Lead at Outdoor Shooting Ranges, the builders and managers of the target range must employ numerous strategies (BMPs) for containing lead and lead residue onsite, including the construction of steel and sand bullet traps, earthen berms and backstops, and possibly lime or phosphate applications if the soil is deemed to be too acidic.[]	<p>Thank you for your comment. Alternative sites are being addressed. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, anticipated effects to soil, water, wildlife</p>
Davis, Donald	Has the applicant considered the cost and feasibility of implementing the above BMPs? If not, do they plan to do so? Given the fact that target ranges are responsible for depositing literally hundreds of pounds of lead into the soil annually, it is important that these BMPs are strictly followed so that no unwanted contamination will occur at the site or surrounding area.	<p>Thank you for your comments. The project is consistent with the mission of the Forest Service. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety and noise on regards to impacts on local economies.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Davis, Donald	As part of its initial screening for special use authorizations the Forest Service must also consider whether the activity will "pose a serious or substantial risk to public health or safety."	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Davis, Donald	we ask that the County reconsider the proposed location. We believe more suitable locations may be found on federal or nonfederal lands, including ones that avoid impacts - particularly sound impacts - to these important areas and the people that use them.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Deal, Clifford	I am very much in favor of this worthwhile project. It will serve by improving public safety, providing recreational opportunities and consolidating dispersed illegal target shooting. Very often, I have looked at the map of GA USFS Ranges, and found there are none in this area. We really need this range, and the fact that USFS is willing to propose this effort with Union County is exceptional. Thank You!	Thank you for your comments.
Deal, Clifford	Often, when I am hiking in the Nat. Forest in this area, I find evidence of target shooting, which is dangerous. This range will provide a legal outlet for this recreation & prep for hunting seasons with minimal adverse impacts.	Thank you for your comments.
Dement, Jay	I am opposed to this Gun Range. In that the proposed location is wedged between two Wilderness Areas, Brasstown and Mark Trail, and aimed directly at the Appalachian Trail.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Dement, Jay	I believe the reports of gun fire would be more than noticeable on the A.T. And, there is a safety factor, with the possibility of a bullet landing on the trail or hitting a branch causing tat to fall on the trail.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Dement, Jay	With a gun range barely over two miles away I can't see why this location is so good. Please find another location that does not affect the peace and quite of a Wilderness Area and does not posses a threat,	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Dement, Jay	I am entering an objection to the proposed gun range site as president of the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club (GATC).	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Dement, Jay	Our objection is on the proposed location of the gun range based on a safety and noise issues.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Dement, Jay	The project comes with a high degree of safety concerns. The A.T. is in defilade of the proposed gun range site from Cold Springs Gap until it nears Chattahoochee Gap. This means that grazing fire from a slightly elevated muzzle of a high-powered rifle that cleanly cleared Turkeypen Mountain could pass over the AT. Any errant bullets could become deflected by a branch and cause an injury to a person on the A.T.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Dement, Jay	Then there is the issue of noise.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Dement, Jay	<p>According to the sound analysis contracted by the USFS with Conway & Owen and posted on the USFS web site, the noise levels on two sections of the Appalachian Trail would be in the 55-65 dB A level or "annoyance uncertainty" level. Given the site's close proximity to the Brasstown and Mark Trail Wildernesses, noise would be disruptive and in contradiction to the laws of Wilderness Areas.</p>	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Dement, Jay	<p>It would appear that another location would better serve everyone.</p>	<p>Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.</p>
Dement, Jay	<p>I am entering an objection to the proposed gun range site as president of the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club (GATC).</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>
Dement, Jay	<p>The project comes with a high degree of safety concerns. The A.T. is in defilade of the proposed gun range site from Cold Springs Gap until it nears Chattahoochee Gap. This means that grazing fire from a slightly elevated muzzle of a high-powered rifle that cleanly cleared Turkeypen Mountain could pass over the AT. Any errant bullets could become deflected by a branch and cause an injury to a person on the A.T.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Dement, Jay	Then there is the issue of noise. According to the sound analysis contracted by the USFS with Conway & Owen and posted on the USFS web site, the noise levels on two sections of the Appalachian Trail would be in the 55-65 dB A level or "annoyance uncertainty" level. Given the site's close proximity to the Brasstown and Mark Trail Wildernesses, noise would be disruptive and in contradiction to the laws of Wilderness Areas.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Dement, Jay	It is unfortunate that this site was considered and I urge this project be rejected. It would appear that another location would better serve everyone.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Denton, Davida	I oppose the proposal to build a 15 acre firing range in the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest, near the Appalachian Trail and near Brasstown Bald. This is a horrid use of the land, for the environmental impacts as well as the noise pollution.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Denton, Davida	I do not see why this should be done on public land. Make an indoor firing range elsewhere. And, as others have noted in the comments section, there is a firing range less than 5 miles from this proposed location.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Denton, Zac	I am writing in staunch opposition to this target range proposal.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Denton, Zac	Please consider the impact that this noise pollution would have on wildlife, local residents, hikers, and tourists visiting Brasstown Bald.	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors noise, anticipated effects to wildlife and threatened/endangered plant and animal species.</p> <p>Concerns regarding wildlife. This is not a key issue because it is not supported by scientific research (Larkin, 1996, Doresky, et al., 2001). Most research on sound impacts to wildlife has addressed issues in aquatic environments, especially as they affect wildlife behavior and communication. Doresky, et al. (2001), however, report that federally-endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers exhibit no response to training activities, including gunfire, on a military base. Based on these studies and experience with other public shooting facilities, the Forest Service concludes that some wildlife species would acclimate to the new conditions and others would adjust by avoiding the area when users are present and that the range would not have an appreciably negative impact on wildlife.</p>
Denton, Zac	What an embarrassment it would be to have gunfire as the background noise for those who simply wish to visit or enjoy one of Georgia's most beautiful areas.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Denton, Zac	As others have noted, there is already a firing range only a few miles away.	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Denton, Zac	This proposal seems to only benefit the few (who want this facility), while ignoring the interests of the majority.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Denton, Zac	Consider, as well, the effect that this facility would have on local tourism and tourist revenue. I, for one, would avoid visiting an area if I knew gunfire would be the aural backdrop.	Thank you for your comments. The project is consistent with the mission of the Forest Service. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety and noise on regards to impacts on local economies.
Dixon, Jennifer	<p>The Historic Preservation Division (HPD) has received initial information concerning the above referenced project requesting comments pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). Our comments are offered to assist the US Department Agriculture (USDA), Forest Service (FS) in complying with the provisions of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA).</p> <p>Thank you for notifying us of this federal undertaking. We look forward to receiving Section 106 compliance documentation, as appropriate. If the federal agency intends to utilize NEPA to comply with Section 106, in lieu of the procedures set forth in 36 CFR Part 800, the USDA, FS should notify HPD and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation of its intent.</p>	Thank you for your comments.
Dobbins, Patty	I believe this site is not the best choice.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Dobbins, Patty	I would like to add additional comments to my previous email in reference to the proposed new gun range. Due to the timing of the last gun test performed on November 8th , I was unable to attend but had many neighbors at the event. They were located on Jonas Mt. Rd. across from Jonas Mt. in the rental home and up where F.C. Collins lived on the big hill seen on the left side of the road before the big 180 curve going to Brasstown Bald. I was told each location could hear the gunshots of the pistol and rifle being fired. Also, it was noted, that there was not anyone located on the A.T. to see if the gunfire could be heard. I believe if there were multiple individuals firing at targets at the same time the noise level would be much greater	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Dobbins, Patty	I am VERY upset with the idea of a New Gun Club being built when there is one 1.5 miles down the road from the proposed site.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Dobbins, Patty	I am afraid the wildlife in the Jonas Mountain Area will be greatly affected by the noise and human factors of another gun range. Can you guarantee that the Bear, Deer, Fox, Turkeys, Owls, Raccoons, and other Wildlife that come thru my property and the surrounding Wilderness Areas will not be affected by this proposal?	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors noise, anticipated effects to wildlife and threatened/endangered plant and animal species.</p> <p>Concerns regarding wildlife. This is not a key issue because it is not supported by scientific research (Larkin, 1996, Doresky, et al., 2001). Most research on sound impacts to wildlife has addressed issues in aquatic environments, especially as they affect wildlife behavior and communication. Doresky, et al. (2001), however, report that federally-endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers exhibit no response to training activities, including gunfire, on a military base. Based on these studies and experience with other public shooting facilities, the Forest Service concludes that some wildlife species would acclimate to the new conditions and others would adjust by avoiding the area when users are present and that the range would not have an appreciably negative impact on wildlife.</p>
Dobbins, Patty	I am concerned about the noise of the gun range. As we walk the roads and woods up here, will we be able to hear gunshots?	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Dobbins, Patty	I am concerned about riding my motorcycle with others on the Scenic 180 highway especially where the range entrance and exit will be. It only takes one car to pull out in front of a motorcycle to end up in the hospital or worse!	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species. Traffic vehicle safety are being addressed in the EA.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Dobbins, Patty	I also hike and fish the trout streams in the local Wilderness areas. Will I have to be afraid of high shots flying around me? We should conserve our Natural Wilderness resources not make them smaller! Please consider my feelings about the gun range having a Significant Adverse Impact on the Wilderness areas. I would like to know when you plan to do the Environmental Analysis and Noise studies.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Driscoll, Brian	There is no reason a shooting range should be allowed on this site as there is suitable sites available within 10 miles of this area .	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Driscoll, Brian	The opening of a gun range so close to hiking , camping and other recreational areas is not what I want our national parks used for	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Drobka, Chris	I object to the placement of the proposed gun club near any residential neighborhoods.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Drobka, Chris	We live near the proposed project and do not want to listen to constant gunfire from this range.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Drobka, Chris	You should. Notify all home owners in this area as to the date and time of a test fire and do it so it realistically represents the volume and noise level this projects represents to residents.	Your request for information has been noted. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. A report from the two live firing test will be available in the project website.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Duckworth & John D. Atkinson, Nancy	We are writing in opposition to the proposed Union County Target Range Project	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Duckworth & John D. Atkinson, Nancy	Noise pollution	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Duckworth & John D. Atkinson, Nancy	Lead impact on the land, water, and animals.	If the proposed action is selected, an Environmental Stewardship Plan will be developed that contains an action plan and best management practices for managing lead accumulation, abatement and removal. Based on similar action plans implemented at Forest Service Target Ranges within the region and others located within the state, lead management procedures have worked as intended.
Duckworth & John D. Atkinson, Nancy	Close proximity to Appalachian Trail and Brasstown Bald (which we hike regularly; as do hundreds of other locals and tourists who desire a quiet, peaceful experience in our forests and wilderness areas).	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Duckworth & John D. Atkinson, Nancy	There are far more persons living in Union County who enjoy the land and area for hiking, fishing, biking and camping, than those whom want to target practice.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Easton, Dan	I'm very much against this gun range in my area. !!!!!	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Easton, Dan	<p>Since all of us in this area have wells & Springs very concerned about ground water contamination due to lead bullets and the amount of lead that will be put into the soil, since all of us live down hill from the proposed gun range.</p> <p>I believe there is even a stream on the proposed land.!</p>	<p>If the proposed action is selected, an Environmental Stewardship Plan will be developed that contains an action plan and best management practices for managing lead accumulation, abatement and removal. Based on similar action plans implemented at Forest Service Target Ranges within the region and others located within the state, lead management procedures have worked as intended.</p>
Easton, Dan	<p>Noise. Current guns and hunting season that already frightens livestock, and ability to enjoy ones own property, This gun range would be a year around thing.</p>	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p>
Easton, Dan	<p>Traffic. The reason that most of us purchased in the area was to be away from the traffic and noise.</p>	<p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p> <p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species. Traffic vehicle safety are being addressed in the EA.</p>
Easton, Dan	<p>Decrease in property values. There has been many articles that have been written about the devaluation of land that is close proximity to gun ranges.</p>	<p>The Forest Service has previously conducted a review of scientific literature and could not find research that provides a statistically valid link between shooting ranges and property values that supports the statement of negative affects.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Easton, Dan	This area is one of the most visited areas in our county due to Brasstown Bald, the Appalachian Trail, etc. The thought of people coming to this Nature area and hearing gun shots is beyond comprehension to me. Might even decrease the visitation to the area and cost the USFS a loss in revenues.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Easton, Dan	<p>What about all of the hiking, nature clubs, Bird watching clubs that use this area?</p> <p>This could drive them away. Who wants to go to a Nature area and here guns.!</p> <p>Guns are a very controversial subject now,unlike hiking, nature, bird watching, etc. that no one should have a problem with.</p> <p>This Gun range seems to be a proposal for a certain group not a thing that all would in enjoy.</p>	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Easton, Dan	<p>I'm very against my county and federal taxes going for this!</p> <p>Just an FYI. I'm a gun owner, but very AGAINST this Gun Range Proposal.</p>	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Engle, Ingrid	I am in support of having a gun range in Union County because I'm a retired Law Enforcement Officer who would like to stay proficient in handling/shooting and gun safety. Having a local gun range would make it easier to stay qualified and meeting the HR218 Law Enforcement Safety Act.	Thank you for your comments.
Engle, Kenneth	I fully support the Union County Range project. I am a retired deputy sheriff from Broward County FL.	Thank you for your comments.
Eubank, Sam	I am writing in support of the establishment of the Union County Target Range	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Followill, Peter	I object to the establishment of the proposed shooting range.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Followill, Peter	The noise pollution generated by a shooting range will directly impact people who are using and enjoying the nearby Appalachian Trail and Brasstown Bald and Mark Trail Wildlife Management Areas.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Followill, Peter	The close proximity of a nearby shooting range in Toombs County (3.5 miles from the proposed range) makes the necessity of the proposed range dubious.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Franklin, Jackie	I am hoping the new gun range on forestry land will be approved because we need a place in Union County for recreational target practice.	Thank you for your comments.
Franklin, Lamar	This target range is needed in the county. Our police officers and sherrif's deputies need a proper place to practice and train for their qualifying exams.	Thank you for your comments.
Franklin, Lamar	The rest of us would like a safe place to take target practice and improve our skills. This is one of the few remote places in the county for such a site.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Fredericks, Donna	I am a member of the Union County Gun Club. I am in favor of this gun range for it's education value.	Thank you for your comments.
Fredericks, William	As a resident of Union County and a member of the Union COUNTY Gun Club I am all for our proposed shooting range.	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Garriga, Stephen	I would like to support the creation of a target range with clubhouse within our county.	Thank you for your comments.
Gillon, David	I am in whole-hearted support of Union County Target Range Project #54559	Thank you for your comments.
Gorman, James	I am fully supportive of the development of the Union County Gun Range	Thank you for your comments.
Gorman, Linda	I am fully supportive of the development of the Union County Gun Range	Thank you for your comments.
govus, david	I write in opposition to the proposed target range for several reasons.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
govus, david	The proposed site will negatively affect the nearby Mark Trail Wilderness and Appalachian Trail with significant noise pollution. The boundary of the Mark Trail Wilderness lays less than 1/2 mile from the proposed range and barely 1 mile from the Appalachian Trail Corridor (AT) as it runs from Cold Springs Gap to Chattahoochee Gap.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
govus, david	<p>On Wednesday November 7th I, along with 3 other volunteers from Georgia Forest Watch, participated in a test to monitor the sound produced by shooting commonly used firearms at the proposed range. The 4 of us scattered out at various points along the section of trail. An assistant fired multiple rounds from a .357 magnum, a .223 AR 15 and a .38 revolver at the proposed range site. I was stationed at the low point of the trail section well within the boundary of the Mark Trail Wilderness and on the AT. The sound was very loud even tho my hearing is impaired. I was shocked at the level of noise as I was directly behind Turkey Pen Mt. and thought that this obstruction between me and shooter would muffle the sound. It did not.</p> <p>A fellow surveyor stationed on the high point of this section with a decibel meter recorded sounds above 70 db. This represents a noise level that is 1000 times greater than the back ground noise level in this section of the Mark Trail Wilderness along the AT. In the several hours that I spent in the Wilderness and along the trail I experienced complete silence other than when the firing was occurring. All of us filled out the USFS noise evaluation form and these along with the db meter readings will most likely be submitted with Georgia Forest Watch's official comments. On Wednesday the 7th all of the leaves were still on the trees which muffled the sound to some degree. A test a week from now would result in recording louder sounds.</p>	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
govus, david	The agency has an obligation to protect the solitude of this area and siting a shooting range at this location is an abdication of that responsibility.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
govus, david	The AT is jointly managed by the Forest Service, the National Park Service and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. Has the agency consulted with its partners about this proposal?	Thank you for your comments.
govus, david	Depositing vast amounts of lead into the earth, which will be the end result if this project is approved, can hardly be considered nature based or friendly.	If the proposed action is selected, an Environmental Stewardship Plan will be developed that contains an action plan and best management practices for managing lead accumulation, abatement and removal. Based on similar action plans implemented at Forest Service Target Ranges within the region and others located within the state, lead management procedures have worked as intended.
Graham, Lee	Since I often lead or attend hikes in the area, I think the Gun Club proposal would detract from the environment of people hiking the Appalachian Trail and visiting Brasstown Bald.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Graham, Lee	As noted, there are other Gun Clubs that can be used in the area without detracting from tourism	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Greer, Chris	I have very serious concerns about the environmental and quality of life impact of this proposed gun range.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Greer, Chris	The sound of gunfire carries a LONG distance. I know this because I lived about 3 miles from a gun range in Milledgeville, GA. The noise, disturbance to the animals, and impact to the forest with the clearing and construction, is unnecessary in my opinion.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range. Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Greer, Chris	If this project HAS to move forward, I propose the range is open only a few days per week so as to minimize the impact of the gunfire to those who live nearby.	
Grilli, Stephen	I am adamantly opposed to a shooting range close to it. It was the beauty and serenity of the area that drew me to it. Gunshots reverberating throughout the Choestoe valley would be an an aesthetic abomination, pure aural pollution. Please deny this desecration of a beautiful, serene area.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Grybeck, Mary	I am opposed to the development of a gun range in this location.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Grybeck, Mary	<p>1. Safety: From the information I have seen, the possibility exists for stray bullets to hit the AT trail corridor - one of the most utilized trails in the state, especially in the spring - potentially hitting hikers and backpackers. Stray bullets can also damage trees by hitting limbs that may drop suddenly or can affect the limited water sources along the trail by metals leeching into the water supply. While not a high probability, it is important to take into account that this gun range and the trail will be impacted for many years to come and to assume that what can happen very likely will occur with enough time.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Grybeck, Mary	<p>2. Noise: This gun range is in close proximity to two Wilderness areas, and its development is not compatible with the purpose of creating wilderness areas, impacting wildlife and human visitors with noise. There are many other parts of the national forest in Georgia that are not so closely connected to official wilderness areas and would be better locations to allow for some additional noise. We need to heavily weigh the responsibilities we have to enforce and protect wilderness designations already in place. </p>	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Grybeck, Mary	<p>3. Need: There is already an active gun range on the eastern side of the AT that is situated in an area where noise impacts and danger to wildlife and humans are limited and in control. Of all the suitable options in North Georgia to locate a new gun range, I question whether there is a strong enough business case to require the development of a new range just 4 miles away given the noise and safety impacts to the area.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.</p>
Hanner, Charles	<p>I am a Union County resident very much in favor of the proposed shooting range</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
Hanson, J.	<p>A gun range may be desirable in the proper place in Union County, provided that it does not degrade the quality of life of existing legal residents and users of the forest.</p>	<p>Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Hanson, J.	This project depends on public welfare for a private club. The use of federal, state and local funds and resources, including land is welfare for a select few. How many \$1000.00s of dollars are going to be spent per member of this private-membership club? The public funding of a private, membership-only club is a bad idea. If the gun club wants a range, let them pay for the land, construction and operation of the range, not the general public who will not be able to use the range without joining the "club".	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Harmon, Lisa	I am opposed to the Union County Target Range.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Harmon, Lisa	I am very concerned about the noise that will be generated by the shooting range, as the gun sounds will very likely be heard from the AT as well as by hunters and campers in the two nearby Wilderness Areas.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Hauser, Laurain	Gun safety is so important and what better way is there than to give people a place to practice. We come to GA for the safety of the hills. Our friends would enjoy going to a safe place to practice using their guns. It is important to have a gun range in Union County.	Thank you for your comments.
Hawkins, Charles	I object to the placing of this shooting range within earshot of two wilderness areas, plus the Appalachian Trail. I enjoy the solitude and quiet of these places and very much enjoy the quiet of the Appalachian Trail. Gunshots would destroy this solitude.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Henderson, Ann	I'm against a shooting range in such close proximity to the AT and nearby wilderness areas.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Henderson, Ann	I object because the noise level of the guns will interfere with the serenity of the wilderness areas!	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Henige, Carol	Union County needs a gun range in Union County for older children who live in Union County to learn how to handle guns and for a possible future with the military.	Thank you for your comments.
Henige, Fred	I believe This project should be completed because it will give the residents from the area the opportunity to learn and practice the safe and proficient handling of firearms.	Thank you for your comments.
Hennigan, Tom	The location of the proposed shooting range is less than one mile from the Appalachian Trail (AT) and approximately one-half mile from both the Brasstown Bald and Mark Trail Wilderness Area boundaries.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Hennigan, Tom	I believe this matters because I am concerned about the noise generated by the shooting range, as the gun reports will likely be heard from the AT as well as by hunters and campers in the two nearby Wilderness Areas. Therefore, I don't believe this shooting range is needed and I request the plans be scuttled. As a hiker/camper, the last thing hikers and campers need is loud noise while they are trying to enjoy the beauty and peace the National forest provides.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Higgins, Anne and Charles "Lee"	We are for the development of the proposed target range as noted in your letter dated October 12, 2018. It will be a good place for family and friends to enjoy the sport of shooting.	Thank you for your comments.
Hilyer, Elvin	Please consider the objections of the many who use nearby areas for solitude (sound and sight) and refreshing outdoor enjoyment.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Hilyer, Elvin	I am among those who object to the addition of a gun range for this area. Is it really essential, given the proximity to another gun range?	
Hoecht, Dietrich	if you deem the construction of the previously outlined deflector system too cumbersome or impractical, then you might want to consider earthen berms all around the range. As I had suggested before, you might create berms that shield the mountains beyond the line of sight (i.e. point of sound generation). The berms should rise at 45 degrees, in order to deflect the sound vertically into the sky. They can and should also have layers of dense evergreens to help absorb the sound energy. If you have many shooting stations you could potentially insert in between a relatively low berm of pyramidal cross-section with 45 degree slope, again, to deflect the sound upward. Of course, it is difficult for me to make site specific recommendations, since I don't have access to the planned layout and its surrounding topography. But, taking the basic concept as described, it should not be hard to make this work by paying attention to the sound mitigation details.	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Hoecht, Dietrich	<p>If you tackle the sound propagation limit matter via berms it appears you need to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Most importantly, place a 45 degree berm in between parking and the range of stations. That would cover the zone towards the road and the mountainous terrain behind, having a significant mitigation effect. The height should be determined at shielding the ridge line of the mountain range. The passage from the parking to the shooting gallery can be done with one or two walk corridors through the berm arranged at an angle (like 45 degrees as opposed to straight 90 degrees) to prevent sound from passing through.b. It appears all the berms surrounding the pistol range should be higher than 8 to 10 feet to be effective. May be add an intermediate one.c. The berm at both sides of the rifle range should be raised, probably to a similar distance of 150 feet as the pistol range. Again, may be add the intermediate one as per b.d. Part of the sound barrier design should be an assessment of the topography at 360 degrees surrounding the shooting line to determine the optimal berm heights relative to ridge heights.	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Hoecht, Dietrich	<p>if you deem the construction of the previously outlined deflector system too cumbersome or impractical, then you might want to consider earthen berms all around the range. As I had suggested before, you might create berms that shield the mountains beyond the line of sight (i. e. point of sound generation). The berms should rise at 45 degrees, in order to deflect the sound vertically into the sky. They can and should also have layers of dense evergreens to help absorb the sound energy. If you have many shooting stations you could potentially insert in between a relatively low berm of pyramidal cross-section with 45 degree slope, again, to deflect the sound upward.</p>	Thank you for your comments.
Hoecht, Dietrich	<p>Of course, it is difficult for me to make site specific recommendations, since I don't have access to the planned layout and its surrounding topography. But, taking the basic concept as described, it should not be hard to make this work by paying attention to the sound mitigation details.</p> <p>One more thing - I checked the surrounding contour lines. Worst case is a 17 degree look angle above level, which necessitates a 30 feet high berm along both sides of the 100 ft wide rifle range. The forward look angle is 12 degrees toward the closest mountain top. Not much can be done in this direction.</p>	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Hoecht, Dietrich	<p>sorry for commenting in this piece meal fashion, but I just found the layout documentation on your website. If you tackle the sound propagation limit matter via berms it appears you need to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Most importantly, place a 45 degree berm in between parking and the range of stations. That would cover the zone towards the road and the mountainous terrain behind, having a significant mitigation effect. The height should be determined at shielding the ridge line of the mountain range. The passage from the parking to the shooting gallery can be done with one or two walk corridors through the berm arranged at an angle (like 45 degrees as opposed to straight 90 degrees) to prevent sound from passing through.b. It appears all the berms surrounding the pistol range should be higher than 8 to 10 feet to be effective. May be add an intermediate one.c. The berm at both sides of the rifle range should be raised, probably to a similar distance of 150 feet as the pistol range. Again, may be add the intermediate one as per b.d. Part of the sound barrier design should be an assessment of the topography at 360 degrees surrounding the shooting line to determine the optimal berm heights relative to ridge heights.	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Hoecht, Dietrich	<p>if you deem the construction of the previously outlined deflector system too cumbersome or impractical, then you might want to consider earthen berms all around the range. As I had suggested before, you might create berms that shield the mountains beyond the line of sight (i. e. point of sound generation). The berms should rise at 45 degrees, in order to deflect the sound vertically into the sky. They can and should also have layers of dense evergreens to help absorb the sound energy. If you have many shooting stations you could potentially insert in between a relatively low berm of pyramidal cross-section with 45 degree slope, again, to deflect the sound upward.</p>	Thank you for your comments.
Hoecht, Dietrich	<p>Of course, it is difficult for me to make site specific recommendations, since I don't have access to the planned layout and its surrounding topography. But, taking the basic concept as described, it should not be hard to make this work by paying attention to the sound mitigation details.</p> <p>one more tidbit on the design. One may need to put a roof over the shooter. The deflector acts somewhat like a solar collector with the muzzle in its focal zone. When the sun is overhead there may be significant heat input, which the shooter should be shielded from.</p>	Thank you for your comments.
Hoecht, Dietrich	<p>I have sketched for you an approach to minimize the propagation of sound, which should be highly effective and low cost.</p> <p>The approach places on both sides of a shooter a curved deflector panel. The shape of the deflector is quasi parabolic, which diffuses and deflects muzzle generated sound upward into the sky at an approximately 90 degree angle (45 degree half angle). Thereby sound propagation is shielded from</p>	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
	<p>reaching the surrounding mountains and forests upward to a 45 degree angle from ground. The panel installation is shown to reach forward about eight feet, which leaves an approximate 20 to 40 degree angle (10 to 20 degree half angle) open to sound propagation in the direction of the target, that is forward and upward propagation.</p> <p>Further, a similar type deflector screen can be placed to the rear of the shooters. I also envision that for the zone behind the targets three or more layers of dense evergreens to be planted, which can absorb much of the sound. Also, if this planting and the terrain on it is sloped upward at approximately 45 degrees impacting sound waves tend to be deflected vertically up into the sky and not echoed into the mountains.</p> <p>The deflector panels in the sketch are made from slightly rounded 1 x 6 wood strips (the type often used in simulated log home shape paneling), arranged at slightly varying orientation . The rounding helps with sound diffusion. The strips are mounted to two or three structural support panels. Alternately one could use a thin bent plywood (4 ft wide) panel, which is attached and conforming to the parabolic curve focused on the muzzle center. Or even a corrugated sheet metal panel (horizontal corrugation orientation) can be used.</p> <p>The sketch shows a 30-inch wide open zone below the muzzle, where sound waves move downward and are reflected upward from the ground. It is possible to include a parabolic shape reflector feature over this area. However, at this point it is hard to estimate how much sound would emanate that way into the surroundings. Probably not worth</p>	

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Hoecht, Dietrich	<p>the effort and expense.</p> <p>Naturally, the sketch shows an idealized geometry. The deflection open cone will shift a bit with varying positioning of the sound source. However, the overall effectiveness of the sound mitigation is not impaired. I would estimate the cost to implement this deflection system for four shooting positions to be no more than \$10,000 installed (other than any plantings and ground modifications behind the targets). I imagine that one can measure the relative sound level improvement from behind a single test deflection panel without much difficulty.</p> <p>Note that I do not claim any proprietary privilege or ownership of this or any similar design. The US Forest Service or any private club or organization is free to use all or part of this design as they please.</p> <p>I have sketched for you an approach to minimize the propagation of sound, which should be highly effective and low cost.</p>	Thank you for your comments.
	<p>The approach places on both sides of a shooter a curved deflector panel. The shape of the deflector is quasi parabolic, which diffuses and deflects muzzle generated sound upward into the sky at an approximately 90 degree angle (45 degree half angle). Thereby sound propagation is shielded from reaching the surrounding mountains and forests upward to a 45 degree angle from ground. The panel installation is shown to reach forward about eight feet, which leaves an approximate 20 to 40 degree angle (10 to 20 degree half angle) open to sound propagation in the direction of the target, that is forward and upward propagation.</p>	

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Hoecht, Dietrich	<p>one more tidbit on the design. One may need to put a roof over the shooter. The deflector acts somewhat like a solar collector with the muzzle in its focal zone. When the sun is overhead there may be significant heat input, which the shooter should be shielded from.</p> <p>I have sketched for you an approach to minimize the propagation of sound, which should be highly effective and low cost.</p> <p>The approach places on both sides of a shooter a curved deflector panel. The shape of the deflector is quasi parabolic, which diffuses and deflects muzzle generated sound upward into the sky at an approximately 90 degree angle (45 degree half angle). Thereby sound propagation is shielded from reaching the surrounding mountains and forests upward to a 45 degree angle from ground. The panel installation is shown to reach forward about eight feet, which leaves an approximate 20 to 40 degree angle (10 to 20 degree half angle) open to sound propagation in the direction of the target, that is forward and upward propagation.</p> <p>Further, a similar type deflector screen can be placed to the rear of the shooters. I also envision that for the zone behind</p>	Thank you for your comments.

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	<p>The deflector panels in the sketch are made from slightly rounded 1 x 6 wood strips (the type often used in simulated log home shape paneling), arranged at slightly varying orientation . The rounding helps with sound diffusion. The strips are mounted to two or three structural support panels. Alternately one could use a thin bent plywood (4 ft wide) panel, which is attached and conforming to the parabolic curve focused on the muzzle center. Or even a corrugated sheet metal panel (horizontal corrugation orientation) can be used.</p>	
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Author(s)	Comment	Response
HOLBROOK, JANIE	<p>one can measure the relative sound level improvement from behind a single test deflection panel without much difficulty.</p> <p>I object to the location of the proposed shooting range because of its proximity to the Appalachian Trail and the two wilderness areas also nearby.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>
HOLBROOK, JANIE	<p>Brasstown Bald wilderness area and the Appalachian Trail are precious Georgia and National Forest locales that have come to mean nature protection, wildlife, plant life protection, etc. A shooting range nearby will ruin that area.</p>	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
holler, clyde	<p>I fully support the development of this range. There are 400+ paying members of te Union County Gun Club, which is remarkable, given that the range does not yet exist. Chatuge Gun Club now has 800+ members and is overcrowded. Impact on the national forest will be minimal, despite the hysterical whining of the usual suspects. Please approve this range.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
Holmgren, Robert	<p>I do NOT want to be subjected to the sound of constant gun fire at my home, no matter how distant or muffled the sound is.</p>	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Hunter, Patrick	Nevertheless, we ask that the county reconsider this proposed location, which is wedged between two Wilderness areas - the Brasstown Wilderness and Mark Trail Wilderness - and in close proximity to the Appalachian Trail. We believe more suitable locations may be found, on federal or nonfederal lands, that avoid impacts - particularly sound impacts - to these important areas and the people that use them.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Hunter, Patrick	North Georgia's Wilderness areas are national and local treasures, designated by Congress because they provide opportunities for remote recreation and quiet solitude in a natural setting--ever more rare and valuable in our increasingly noisy world. To be clear, Wilderness designation does not limit the uses of land outside the Wilderness boundary, however, when other options exist, it would be unfortunate to locate incompatible uses close together--like putting a bowling alley upstairs from a library. The bowling patrons might not notice, but you would surely see a drop in use of the library	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Hunter, Patrick	<p>A decrease in the use of the Mark Trail and Brasstown Wilderness areas, and hiking along the Appalachian Trail, would be a significant blow to Union County's economy. Occupying some 750,000 acres in north Georgia, the Chattahoochee National Forest is a major economic engine in the region. The Forest Service estimates that in 2016 the Chattahoochee-</p> <p>Oconee National Forest supported 1,670 jobs and over \$67 million of labor income.</p> <p>1 In 2016 alone nonresident visits to the forests, for purposes other than hunting and fishing, generated over \$52 million of expenditures in local economies.² The national forests are a key reason outdoor recreation in Georgia generates \$27.3 billion in consumer spending, \$8.1 billion in wages and salaries, and \$1.8 billion in local and state tax revenue.³</p> <p>A substantial portion of that economic output benefits Union County. Aside from jobs created through recreation on national forests, the values provided by national forests draw businesses and tourists to the area and benefit county residents. The Union County website specifically promotes the "expansive natural beauty of our area, complete with majestic waterfalls, invigorating hiking trails and crystal clear lakes" many of which are found in national forests.⁴ Blairsville's website features the "over 80 miles of the Appalachian Trail" as a top attraction in Union County.⁵ Similarly, the Brasstown Wilderness is one of the most visited Wilderness areas in the Southeast.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. The project is consistent with the mission of the Forest Service. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety and noise on regards to impacts on local economies.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Hunter, Patrick	People are drawn to these areas for their expansive natural beauty, scenic views, solitude, hiking, the ability to view wildlife, and other reasons. Those values are especially prominent in relatively secluded areas such as Wilderness and along the Appalachian Trail. Locating a shooting range in close proximity to those attractions may detract from the values those areas provide, causing people to visit them less frequently. Certainly the sound of repetitive gunfire is not what people expect to hear when visiting those areas.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Hunter, Patrick	We have questions about other parts of the county's proposal. First, the county should explain why it would choose to take on the extended liability it has requested. The proposed shooting range would be operated by the Union County Gun Club ("Gun Club") but the special use permit issued by the Forest Service would belong to the county. The county has requested that the Forest Service issue a permit to last "a minimum of 100 years." 6 That is a significant period of liability for the county to undertake. Moreover, the Gun Club can be "dissolved at any time." ⁷ What does the county propose to do with the property if the Gun Club is dissolved? Would the county take over operating the shooting range, and if so, at what cost?	Thank you for your comment.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Hunter, Patrick	<p>Second, to obtain a special use permit from the Forest Service the county must show that it has "the technical and financial capability to construct, operate, maintain, and terminate the project." 36 C.F.R. § 251.54(d)(3). To make that showing, the county has pointed to funding available through the current special purpose local option sales tax ("SPLOST").⁸ SPLOST funds may only be used "exclusively for the purpose or purposes specified in the resolution or ordinance calling for imposition of the tax." Ga. Code § 48-8-121(a)(1). Courts have strictly construed that statutory language. See, e.g., <i>Johnstone v. Thompson</i>, 280 Ga. 611 (2006) (rejecting argument that general SPLOST language about updating computer workstations for all students allowed the county to provide laptops to some students).</p> <p>The referendum establishing the current SPLOST in Union County does not appear to contemplate using funds to construct a shooting range to be run by a private entity. Foremost, all projects funded by the SPLOST must be "owned or operated" by the County, City of Blairsville, or both. As proposed, the land chosen for the shooting range would be "owned" by the Forest Service and the range itself would be "operated" by Gun Club, seemingly barring use of SPLOST funds. Further, even if the County did "own or operate" the shooting range, construction of the range does not appear to fall into one of the eight categories of activities authorized by the SPLOST referendum. Constructing the range is not "upgrading" or "improving" an existing recreational facility (category 6) and the county is not "acquiring" any land (category 8). The other categories are unrelated to the proposal.</p>	Thank you for your comment.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Hunter, Patrick	<p>Third, using SPLOST funds to build the shooting range for the benefit of the Gun Club may run afoul of the Gratuities Clause of the Georgia Constitution. That clause states that "[e]xcept as otherwise provided in the Constitution, the General Assembly shall not have the power to grant any donation or gratuity . . ." Ga. Const. art. III, § 6, ¶ VI.9 The clause applies to cities and counties. <i>Grand Lodge of Ga., Indep. Order of Odd Fellows v. City of Thomasville</i>, 226 Ga. 4, 8 (1970). Whether a gratuity has been granted turns on whether the "state receives a substantial benefit in exchange" for the good or service provided. <i>Garden Club of Georgia v. Shackelford</i>, 274 Ga. 653, 654 (2002).</p>	<p>Goal 31 of the Forest Plan of Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests directs us to <i>"Provide a spectrum of high quality, nature-based recreation settings and opportunities that reflect the unique or exceptional resources of the Forest and the interests of the recreating public on an environmentally sustainable, financially sound, and operationally effective basis. Adapt management of recreation facilities and opportunities as needed to shift limited resources to those opportunities"</i>.</p> <p>Authorization of a target range facilities is consistent with Forest Service policy (FSM 2335.4) when the use is 1) consistent with Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and 2) when the authorization would enhance forest management by improving public safety, providing recreational opportunities and consolidating dispersed target shooting. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The environmental analysis will include consideration of factors like public safety, potential noise from gunfire, heritage resource sites, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Hunter, Patrick	<p>There appears to be no substantial benefit to Union County here. The shooting range would be operated and maintained by the Gun Club - a private, member-based company.¹⁰ The shooting range would be open on a regular basis only to paying members of the Gun Club. Most of the public would not be allowed to use the facility most of the time. In short, almost all of the benefit of the facility would accrue only to members of the private Gun Club, while many of the liabilities would be held by the county pursuant to the terms of the special use permit.¹¹ The Georgia Court of Appeals upheld a violation of the Gratuities Clause in a similar circumstance where a county paved the parking lot of a private VFW Post resulting in no substantial benefit to the county. See <i>Kennedy v. State</i>, 205 Ga. App. 152 (1992).</p>	<p>Goal 31 of the Forest Plan of Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests directs us to <i>"Provide a spectrum of high quality, nature-based recreation settings and opportunities that reflect the unique or exceptional resources of the Forest and the interests of the recreating public on an environmentally sustainable, financially sound, and operationally effective basis. Adapt management of recreation facilities and opportunities as needed to shift limited resources to those opportunities"</i>.</p> <p>Authorization of a target range facilities is consistent with Forest Service policy (FSM 2335.4) when the use is 1) consistent with Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and 2) when the authorization would enhance forest management by improving public safety, providing recreational opportunities and consolidating dispersed target shooting. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The environmental analysis will include consideration of factors like public safety, potential noise from gunfire, heritage resource sites, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Jackson, Sally	<p>Many men, women and children in Union County have guns in their homes but do not know how to shoot or know gun safety. It is very important for everyone to have the knowledge. It is my understanding that Union County Gun Club will will have NRA instructors to help the people in our county to have this education. We should applaud those that are working to get this club established.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
Johnson, Kylie	<p>This is an unnecessary project, seeing as there is a range a few miles down the road.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Johnson, Kylie	Poses too much of a threat to AT hikers.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Johnson, Liz	I am concerned about the noise generated by the shooting range, as the gun reports will likely be heard from the AT as well as by hunters and campers in the two nearby Wilderness Areas.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Johnson, Liz	It seems that the actual need for such a project also remains in question, as there is already an existing shooting range 3.5 miles from the proposed site in nearby Towns County	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Johnson, Liz	I object to this shooting range.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
JONES, BONNIE	The location of this proposed shooting range is less than one mile from the Appalachian Trail (AT) and approximately one-half mile from both the Brasstown Bald and Mark Trail Wilderness Area boundaries.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
JONES, BONNIE	I am concerned about the noise generated by the shooting range since the shots will likely be heard from the AT as well as by hunters and campers in the two nearby Wilderness Areas.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
JONES, BONNIE	Since there is an existing shooting range 3.5 miles from the proposed site in nearby Towns County, I do not believe this is a need for this range so close to the AT and wilderness areas.	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>
JONES, HAROLD	I oppose this proposed shooting range since it will be less than one mile from the Appalachian Trail (AT) and approximately one-half mile from the Brasstown Bald and Mark Trail Wilderness Area boundaries.	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
JONES, HAROLD	I am concerned about the noise generated by the shooting range as the shots will be heard while hiking on the AT as well as by people using the nearby Wilderness Areas.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
JONES, HAROLD	Since there is an existing shooting range 3.5 miles from the proposed site, I do not believe there is a need for a range which is so close to the AT and wilderness areas.	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Judd, Steve	Due to the noise that will reach my property, I object to the proposed Union County Target Range off SR180.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Judd, Steve	I hereby retract my objection to the proposed Union County Target Range (letter dated 5 Nov 2018) off SR 180.	Thank you for your comments.
Kornder, Jennifer	I conducted my own "noise test" and concluded it was OK. This proposed range is very close to an area where Georgians and people from across the world come to enjoy our natural resources. The Appalachian Trail is one of the world's greatest natural treasures. To allow a shooting range with its inherent dangers and noise pollution in this area is a desecration of our natural resources and limits the economic viability and innate value of this tremendous resource for the global visitors and local nature-lovers who come to enjoy the trail.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Kornder, Jennifer	Further, permitting a local gun club to exercise so much control in an area where tourists, nature-lovers, families, and wildlife populations flock to our public lands is absolutely a desecration of the resources that Georgians must all steward. Shooting practice can and should happen in closed environments, where sound controls and safety are amply provided for to those who wish to be involved with firearms and their many hazards. This is a choice those individuals should make to stay indoors, in protected areas, if they wish to enjoy explosive, life-threatening technologies that harm and kill living things. Further, there is another shooting range only a couple miles from the proposed site. Allowing an extraneous range to compromise and desecrate one of Georgia's natural treasures - the AT - is irresponsible, ill-advised, and shows absolute disregard for the well-being of our populace and our natural resources.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Kornder, Jennifer	Nature and its beauty, bounty and silences must be protected not only for our enjoyment but for future generations.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Kostyrna, Jennifer	I am very disappointed to hear a gun range is being considered for this beautiful area. My family and I love to hike in this area, and would hate for the peacefulness there to be interrupted by the noise of a gun range.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Kostyrna, Jennifer	Please look for other places which will be less disruptive to hikers, campers, and lovers of nature!	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Lacek, Alan	I am totally opposed to this proposal as it represents an intrusion on a land area that remains relatively undisturbed by commercialization.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Lacek, Alan	There are many more suitable areas throughout the county that would be more accommodating to this activity.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Lacek, Alan	The noise created by this activity is not only disturbing to humans but unsettling to the native animals as well.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors noise, anticipated effects to wildlife and threatened/endangered plant and animal species. Concerns regarding wildlife. This is not a key issue because it is not supported by scientific research (Larkin, 1996, Doresky, et al., 2001). Most research on sound impacts to wildlife has addressed issues in aquatic environments, especially as they affect wildlife behavior and communication. Doresky, et al. (2001), however, report that federally-endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers exhibit no response to training activities, including gunfire, on a military base. Based on these studies and experience with other public shooting facilities, the Forest Service concludes that some wildlife species would acclimate to the new conditions and others would adjust by avoiding the area when users are present and that the range would not have an appreciably negative impact on wildlife.
Lacek, Alan	This is a beautiful area that deserves not to be affected by the noise and traffic this will create.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species. Traffic vehicle safety are being addressed in the EA.
Lacek, Alan	Doesn't a gun club already exist not far from this location? Land intended for public use should not be compromised in such a manner.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
LaFountain, Marc	There is already a range close by. No need to duplicate it with another so close to the App Trail.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
LaFountain, Marc	This will produce noise that ruins the tranquility of the area.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Lamar Paris, (Letters of Support)	See attachments	Thank you for your comments.
Lance, Will	I am deeply opposed to this proposed gun range ever being built on national forest land (and that goes for any proposed range on public land along 515 too)	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Lance, Will	If the proposal is along Highway 180 that is an especially poor choice for a site being that it would be along the major scenic highway leading to the highest mountain in our state.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Lance, Will	<p>Not only would it be environmentally destructive as well as permanently disruptive to area wildlife; it'd also be a severe eye sore located right along the highest scenic highway in our state leading up to one of the biggest tourist destinations in our state (Brasstown Bald). That being the case then what a stupid proposal this is! For that matter I'm sure most folks around here, especially those in a gun club, have PLENTY of access to PLENTY of land to already do plenty of shooting on without tearing up our national forest to do so. Tell the Chatuge Gun Club to go buy some private land to build their gun club(s) on and to leave the national forest open to the nation's people.</p>	<p>Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.</p>
Lanier, Marshall	<p>I am writing this letter in support of the Union County Gun Club, a proposed project to create and manage a membership driven, public firearm range for recreation, sporting and training in the use and safety of firearms in Union County Georgia.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
Lavery, Robert	<p>I am strongly in favor of the Union County Target Range project for a number of reasons.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
Lipscomb, Jane	<p>As a hiker and camper in National Forests, I fear the range so near the Appalachian Trail and wilderness areas will be dangerous</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Lipscomb, Jane	in addition add to noise pollution	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p>
Lipscomb, Jane	Please consider keeping our wilderness areas for a quiet, safe retreat for our citizens.	<p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p> <p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Lovegren, Sven	I firmly believe a gun range on National Forest Land is a big mistake.	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>
Lovegren, Sven	It would be harmful to wildlife and upsetting to fisherman	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors noise, anticipated effects to wildlife and threatened/endangered plant and animal species.</p> <p>Concerns regarding wildlife. This is not a key issue because it is not supported by scientific research (Larkin, 1996, Doresky, et al., 2001). Most research on sound impacts to wildlife has addressed issues in aquatic environments, especially as they affect wildlife behavior and communication. Doresky, et al. (2001), however, report that federally-endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers exhibit no response to training activities, including gunfire, on a military base. Based on these studies and experience with other public shooting facilities, the Forest Service concludes that some wildlife species would acclimate to the new conditions and others would adjust by avoiding the area when users are present and that the range would not have an appreciably negative impact on wildlife.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Lovegren, Sven	hikers, bikers, and even to folks just out to enjoy nature and look at the scenery.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Lockett, Larry	With the Chatuge Gun Club just a few miles down from this proposed location have other alternative sites been truly considered to more centrally locate a shooting(target) range to better serve the recreational public rather than this location on such a large ranger District which includes several counties.?	Thank you for your comment. Different alternatives will be evaluated in the Environmental Assessment.
Lockett, Larry	Will this proposed shooting (target) range be more available than the Chatuge Gun Club which is basically a private range with public access only a few hours every month.? I am concerned that this project, with Union County holding the Special Use permit, will be operated the same way as the Chatuge Gun Club resulting in limited true public opportunities.	Thank you for your comments.
Lockett, Larry	If Union County decides they no longer want to operate the Union County Target Range who will continue the operation and if worst case scenario,who will be responsible for the cost of remediation, clean up and disposal of the lead should that be required if it is closed.?	Thank you for your comment.
M, Joan	support the target range! I can't help but notice how many people against the target range do not live in Union County. They most likely have no knowledge of the time and effort that has gone into the search for a location. Nor do they know details of the exact location and surrounding area? Repeating the same wrong and misleading information just because they saw it in other comments shows how little they know of the details.	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
M, Joan	<p>I feel people in Union County would not go into other cities and try to prevent a new shopping center, school or golf course from being built just because they feel the construction would cause more traffic noise and danger to people and animals with more cars and trucks on the roads. I feel people living in the county know more of what their area should be used for than people that do not live in Union County.</p>	Thank you for your comments.
Maguire Young, Dena	<p>A hiker can hike ANYWHERE in the vast Forest, why not allow a few acres to be used for sport shooters, law enforcement training and 4H groups? The proposed site took many months to locate as a safe suitable location. Due to the mountains in Union County, private land for a target range is not available. I am a strong supporter of the target range project. I LIVE HERE!</p>	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Maguire Young, Dena	<p>I do not agree with a shooting range in the proposed area. The shooting will be heard in a very popular hiking area near the Appalachian Trail and Brasstown Bald.</p> <p>Please do not allow this disturbance to be heard. This will dampen the enjoyment of these areas and they will no longer be peaceful places to enjoy the forest and nature. Peace is a major focus for the many who pass through the AT on day hikes and for those who's endeavor is to complete the AT Trail. Brasstown Bald is also a very frequented area for the sights and for tranquility. Shooting will destroy the enjoyment of thousands who traverse these areas annually. It serves a greater number of people than a shooting range would or should serve.</p>	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Majeski, Kate	I oppose the gun range so close to the Appalachian Trail.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Majeski, Kate	It is difficult to enjoy a calm and peaceful walk in the woods with the disturbing sounds of gunfire, and the anxiety of ricochet and irresponsible gunfire potentially causing harm to innocent hikers and outdoorspeople.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Majeski, Kate	Please take in all users of the area and do not proceed with the building of this gun range at this location.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Malone, Kelsey	I am writing to express my opposition to the shooting range proposed to be developed in the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Malone, Kelsey	Very near to the proposed site of this shooting range lies the Appalachian Trail, where people from all over the world come to do exactly that: to strip away the noise of our species, of violence and social media, and to be quiet in the presence of the wonders of our planet which we so often abuse and take for granted.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Malone, Kelsey	I believe it is important especially for those in power to consider the benefits for the future generations. I am young, and many people my age and younger have never known a world that was quiet. Studies show that we continue to feel more and more disconnected from each other as a result of this, and the overwhelming influence of the internet, leading to depression and loss of culture. It's important to me that we attempt to preserve the atmosphere of Georgia's natural beauty and of the Appalachian Trail, not just as a way to commune with nature but also to commune with the thousands who have made that journey before.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Malone, Kelsey	For those this range would have served, there is already a shooting range a couple of miles down the road, which renders this one redundant. Any funds designated to the proposed development could be used to upgrade that one, to the benefit of all of its patrons, new and old.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Malone, Kelsey	For this reason, I oppose the development of this shooting range. Leave nature quiet where we still can. Allow people to feel communion with the planet, the power of our wonderfully made bodies, and to each other again, in peace.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Malone, Kelsey	Noise is not the only issue.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.
Malone, Kelsey	As stated before - an enormous cost in money and environmental impact would be saved by simply improving the existing shooting range. Adding space to accommodate more people at the existing range would impact less land than building a second one.	The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range. Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Malone, Kelsey	Our world is becoming less green by the year, coincidentally at the same time that many are becoming more concerned with humanity's environmental impacts AND are becoming politically active... in a very, very big way. Pair this with the fact that the Appalachian Trail draws hundreds if not thousands (and their dollars!) to our state yearly. Who are you serving by jeopardizing that? It cannot be the people of Georgia. What do we do with representatives who do not represent the people's needs?	Thank you for your comments.
Malone, Kelsey	I struggle to understand how anyone could justify the cost of this project regardless of the noise levels - which also pose a threat to the tranquility of the nearby Appalachian Trail - to those holding the purse strings, OR to their voting base (Their voting base which, as it turns out, is writing letters telling them exactly how they feel and being disregarded.)	Thank you for your comments. The project is consistent with the mission of the Forest Service. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety and noise on regards to impacts on local economies.
Malone, Patrick	I am writing in support of this project for a variety of reasons-	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Malone, Patrick	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is compatible with the Forest Plan to "provide a spectrum of high-quality, nature based recreation settings and opportunities". 2. With more than 450 members in the fledgling Union County Gun Club there is a demonstrated need. 3. The potential site is isolated providing sufficient dissipation of any noise adversely effecting the closest neighbors 4. Currently Union County citizens use a variety of settings for target practice some of which present clear dangers to the surrounding neighbors 5. This site plan has all the necessary safety features built in. 6. The site would have open to the general public days to serve the greater Union County community. 7. The site would also be used by local public safety personnel to maintain their proficiencies with a variety of firearms. 8. The project has the full support of local elected public officials thereby demonstrating "the will of the people". 	<p>Goal 31 of the Forest Plan of Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests directs us to <i>"Provide a spectrum of high quality, nature-based recreation settings and opportunities that reflect the unique or exceptional resources of the Forest and the interests of the recreating public on an environmentally sustainable, financially sound, and operationally effective basis. Adapt management of recreation facilities and opportunities as needed to shift limited resources to those opportunities"</i>.</p> <p>Authorization of a target range facilities is consistent with Forest Service policy (FSM 2335.4) when the use is 1) consistent with Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and 2) when the authorization would enhance forest management by improving public safety, providing recreational opportunities and consolidating dispersed target shooting. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The environmental analysis will include consideration of factors like public safety, potential noise from gunfire, heritage resource sites, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Malone, Patrick	I am writing in support of this project for a variety of reasons-	Thank you for your comments.
Massa, John	As I live in Florida, I am unable to attend the public meetings. As this project appears to be very close to my property, I am very concerned that the noise of a shooting range will have a disastrous impact on the value of my property and on the peace and quiet of my neighbors.	The Forest Service has previously conducted a review of scientific literature and could not find research that provides a statistically valid link between shooting ranges and property values that supports the statement of negative affects.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Massa, John	I therefore request that this project not be approved.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Massa, John A.	As I live in Florida, I am unable to attend the public meetings. As this project appears to be very close to my property, I am very concerned that the noise of a shooting range will have a disastrous impact on the value of my property and on the peace and quiet of my neighbors.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Massa, John A.	I therefore request that this project not be approved.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
maxcy, chuck	Building a retirement home on Jonas Mountain off Williams Drive. Should be moving in early this December.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
maxcy, chuck	Based on Google Earth aerial views that puts me as about the closest or the closest home to the proposed shooting range.. ~5400' give or take. Terrain looks favorable for noise suppression. I hunt, fish and will be target practicing on my property off and on so no I'm not opposed to the shooting range. I'm just wondering what the proposed hours of operation might be for noise abatement and if I can expect to hear some 50 cal and tannerite going off when I'm sipping coffee (or whatever!) on the deck in early in the mornings or evenings.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Maxcy, Chuck	I'm interested in your test methods specifically, live fire type (single, semi-auto and full auto) and caliber(s) being tested. At what location at the test site and what direction i.e. AZ & EL are you shooting? Will you be simulating proposed structures that could deflect sound? Where are your noise sensors located and what type of sensors are you using, are they directional, omni-directional?	Your request for information has been noted. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. A report from the two live firing test will be available in the project website.
Maxcy, Chuck	Having worked with and tested aircraft weapon systems, various types of ordnance and crew served weapons including small arms for 38 years at NAVAIR, I'm quite familiar with detailed test plans, data acquisition points including environmental effects associated with weather and time of day, humidity, winds, etc.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.
	Additionally, an 08 November live test fire would not provide an accurate noise assessment based on a sampling from one (1) test point even with several types of caliber weapons. You would need numerous test points conducted at various times of the year (full foliage / no foliage) with a variety of different weather points and calibers (same ones used for each test) to come up with any type of quantitative data collection.	
	Firing a 22 then a 50cal in the rain on a windy day in November with folks standing a mile away listening is not a test.	The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Mazza, Barbara	<p>Testing right can help you in the long run and could solve some of your problems by knowing what to do and how to limit and suppress sounds if needed.</p> <p>As stated previously, I'm not against the range, but the home I'm building and should be moving into shortly, is the closest to it. So if the range is going to be built, then you need to build it right and have all the data you need to do so.</p> <p>I guess I should expect a few qualified test folks collecting noise samples on Thursday 08 November around 08:30 and several times through 2019 to get things right.</p> <p>I AM AGAINST THIS TARGET RANGE.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Mazza, Barbara	<p>We purchased our home because it is in a quiet peaceful area. Hearing loud gun shots would not be quiet and peaceful. We also have a dog who freaks out when shots are heard.</p> <p>I would vote NO, on this project.</p>	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
McCann, Ed	<p>I am an avid (professionally trained) shooter. At first glance it would seem that a local gun range would be a nice thing to have.</p> <p>But the more I think about a group of people being able to acquire a piece of Forest Service land (for any reason) the more uncomfortable I become.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>
McCann, Ed	<p>I can't believe there isn't a piece of land available (like the land purchased for the shotgun range that wouldn't require using Forest Service land! Speaking of that, why couldn't you use that piece of property?</p>	<p>Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.</p>
McCann, Ed	<p>I'm afraid you would be setting a precedent that will resurface in the future! Land developers would then have a case for snapping up additional F.S. land for their own gain and once that happens it's all over.</p> <p>The land was set aside for a reason, and I think it would be a mistake to breach the original intent.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
McCann, Edward	The animals that inhabited this land will be scared away. No one wants to listen to constant gunfire for miles around (7 days a week!).	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range. Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
McCann, Edward	Is there no other location available?	Thank you for your comments. The project is consistent with the mission of the Forest Service. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety and noise on regards to impacts on local economies.
McCann, Edward	I'm afraid you'll be letting the Genie out of the bottle, and once it's opened there will be no stopping it! Think about all the people who paid big money to purchase land bordered by Forest Service land! The reason they did that was to keep the land the way it was supposed to be! Be careful! There's no going back!	Thank you for your comments.
McKnight, Terry	I write this in support for the construction of the proposed new firearms range facility for the citizens of the area to allow them a safe and controlled area to shoot and practice with their firearms.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
McSwain, Rebecca	Please, please do not put a shooting range in this location!	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
McSwain, Rebecca	The noise from a range here will be a major disturbance for hikers on the Appalachian Trail less than one mile away, and those looking for peace and quiet in the Mark Trail Wilderness area about half a mile away. Additionally, it will make gunfire the background sound at Brasstown Bald, a popular tourist attraction	

Author(s)	Comment	Response
McSwain, Rebecca	Besides, there is already a shooting range 3.5 miles from this proposed location. Surely there is no need for two shooting ranges in such close proximity to each other!	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
McSwain, Rebecca	Shooting ranges seem to be pervasive in NE GA. Noise from them already penetrates several sections of the Bartram Trail in Rabun County. And in NC, the sounds of gunfire ring out on the Bartram trail and the AT between Wayah Gap and Wayah Bald. Enough already	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Meyers, Thomas	The location of the proposed shooting range is less than one mile from the Appalachian Trail (AT) and approximately one-half mile from both the Brasstown Bald and Mark Trail Wilderness Area boundaries.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Meyers, Thomas	I believe this matters because I am concerned about the noise generated by the shooting range, as the gun reports will likely be heard from the AT as well as by hunters and campers in the two nearby Wilderness Areas. Therefore, I don't believe this shooting range is needed and I request the plans be scuttled. As a hiker/camper, the last thing hikers and campers need is loud noise while they are trying to enjoy the beauty and peace the National forest provides.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
miller, ross	The land will be lost to forest for a long time, even if the activity is discontinued, due to metal and other contaminants remaining.	If the proposed action is selected, an Environmental Stewardship Plan will be developed that contains an action plan and best management practices for managing lead accumulation, abatement and removal. Based on similar action plans implemented at Forest Service Target Ranges within the region and others located within the state, lead management procedures have worked as intended.
miller, ross	This use is incompatible with primary national forest goals	<p>Goal 31 of the Forest Plan of Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests directs us to <i>"Provide a spectrum of high quality, nature-based recreation settings and opportunities that reflect the unique or exceptional resources of the Forest and the interests of the recreating public on an environmentally sustainable, financially sound, and operationally effective basis. Adapt management of recreation facilities and opportunities as needed to shift limited resources to those opportunities"</i>.</p> <p>Authorization of a target range facilities is consistent with Forest Service policy (FSM 2335.4) when the use is 1) consistent with Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and 2) when the authorization would enhance forest management by improving public safety, providing recreational opportunities and consolidating dispersed target shooting. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The environmental analysis will include consideration of factors like public safety, potential noise from gunfire, heritage resource sites, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
miller, ross	Private enterprise will fund such an activity on private land when a study shows adequate demand	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Miller, Jocelyn	I oppose the construction of a gun range in the national forest.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Miller, Jocelyn	I oppose the construction of a gun range in the national forest.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Miller, M	I'm reading the comments about so many that have the hobby of hiking, fishing and tree watching what about other people that want to enjoy their hobby of using a target range. There are a lot of people that are not able or don't like to hike but still want to be outdoors and enjoy their hobby at the range.	Thank you for your comments.
Miller, M	I think this is a very good thing, then everyone on can enjoy their outdoor hobbies. I think people that live in Union County know what is best for the county and what is needed. Not outsiders.	Thank you for your comments.
Miller, Phyllis	I strongly support the target range. I live here. I am concerned about the noise generated by the shooting range, as the gun reports will likely be heard from the AT as well as by hunters and campers in the two nearby Wilderness Areas. This is a scary and unnerving sound for those of us in earshot of such noise.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Miller, Phyllis	The actual need for such a project also remains in question, as there is already an existing shooting range 3.5 miles from the proposed site in nearby Towns County.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Miller, Phyllis	Please reconsider developing this shooting range and deny it.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Miller, Phyllis	I am concerned about the noise generated by the shooting range, as the gun reports will likely be heard from the AT as well as by hunters and campers in the two nearby Wilderness Areas. This is scary and unnerving sound for those of us in earshot of such noise as we seek the quiet and peacefulness of the Forests.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Miller, Phyllis	The actual need for such a project also remains in question, as there is already an existing shooting range 3.5 miles from the proposed site in nearby Towns County.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Mitchell, George		Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
	<p>For ten years, I was a lead Range Officer at Markham Park Target Range in Broward County, Florida.</p>	
	<p>After that range opened, more than forty years ago, the general public, as well as various law enforcement agencies and manufacturers, had ready access to a controlled, safe, accessible facility.</p>	
	<p>With the burgeoning of the South Florida population, people needed some place to shoot thus, a safe, accessible, target range became essential.</p>	
	<p>Given the steady growth of the North Georgia and Western North Carolina mountains, the same rubrics apply. The tendency for some residents to shoot at a knothole or at a traffic sign would be severely mitigated by, with and through a public shooting range.</p>	
	<p>A public range, like the one proposed by and for Union County, is also an essential venue on which children can learn the responsibilities inherent in, with and to firearms.</p>	
	<p>Panther Top is a decidedly limited alternative because it is small and it is not a controlled facility. I have made use of it and have seen a few instances of unsafe gun handling which, to put it mildly, unsettled me.</p>	
	<p>During its time of existence, the Chatuge Gun Club has rapidly expanded to the point at which a second area target range would distribute and would relieve the pressure.</p>	
	<p>A regulated, safe range is rapidly becoming essential for the WNC / NGA mountains.</p>	

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Moon, Jeff	I am totally against this project due to it's location near the Appalachian trail, Brasstown Bald, and on the headwaters of one of the best native trout streams in Union county.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Moore-Pope, Sandra	I would like to object using public lands for private use, particularly weapon-related activities.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Moore-Pope, Sandra	That defeats the purpose of having greenspace and public lands set aside for the use and enjoyment of all.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Morgan, Catherine	I object to the proposed shooting range near Brasstown Bald, for the following reasons: 1) Hikers and tourists in the area expect reasonable quiet, not sporadic gunfire as in a gang area of a large city.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Morgan, Catherine	2) It will cause a great loss of tourist dollars because of this.	Thank you for your comments. The project is consistent with the mission of the Forest Service. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety and noise on regards to impacts on local economies.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Morgan, Catherine	3) Wildlife will be negatively affected by gunfire throughout the year. The hunting season is bad enough, but this gunfire all year long will make the surrounding habitat completely unfriendly to wildlife, who need all the livable habitat they can get.	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors noise, anticipated effects to wildlife and threatened/endangered plant and animal species.</p> <p>Concerns regarding wildlife. This is not a key issue because it is not supported by scientific research (Larkin, 1996, Doresky, et al., 2001). Most research on sound impacts to wildlife has addressed issues in aquatic environments, especially as they affect wildlife behavior and communication. Doresky, et al. (2001), however, report that federally-endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers exhibit no response to training activities, including gunfire, on a military base. Based on these studies and experience with other public shooting facilities, the Forest Service concludes that some wildlife species would acclimate to the new conditions and others would adjust by avoiding the area when users are present and that the range would not have an appreciably negative impact on wildlife.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Morgan, Catherine	4) This would set a precedent for shooting ranges throughout Forest Service lands in Georgia, threatening wildlife habitat and tourism across all of Georgia.	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors noise, anticipated effects to wildlife and threatened/endangered plant and animal species.</p> <p>Concerns regarding wildlife. This is not a key issue because it is not supported by scientific research (Larkin, 1996, Doresky, et al., 2001). Most research on sound impacts to wildlife has addressed issues in aquatic environments, especially as they affect wildlife behavior and communication. Doresky, et al. (2001), however, report that federally-endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers exhibit no response to training activities, including gunfire, on a military base. Based on these studies and experience with other public shooting facilities, the Forest Service concludes that some wildlife species would acclimate to the new conditions and others would adjust by avoiding the area when users are present and that the range would not have an appreciably negative impact on wildlife.</p>
Murphy, Owen	I cannot imagine a shooting range in this location and so close to these wilderness areas and the national AT trail. I think it would be a disservice to the many outdoorsman who love, and have grown up in, this area. I appreciate your consideration of my objection and I would respectfully ask that this project be re-thought and re-located.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Murry, Joan	I know the Forest belongs to all citizens, however there are over 29,000 acres of Forest in Union County and to not allow a few acres to be used for an activity not everyone takes part in is a little bit selfish. I may not fish, hunt, hike, sing my favorite song, bird watch, or just site under a tree, but I don't try to prevent anyone from perusing their likes. In the Forest the sound of gun fire can be heard at any time, and almost anywhere. Having a few specific acres for people to enjoy their hobby in a safe way is not too much to ask of such a huge area. Why is it ok for people that don't agree with others to try to dictate what other people have the right to do? Tree coverage, elevation and the hills surrounding the proposed target range will keep sound to a minimum. The bottom line is the forest should be shared by all and asking for the amount of space for the target range and expansion of sound is not out of line. I ask that others in opposition consider how SELFISH they are being. Hike, sing, shout anywhere you like, I won't try to stop you, please don't try to stop me from doing what I enjoy.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Myers, Doug	As a veteran, gun owner, and gun club member, I wholeheartedly agree that a gun range in Union county is needed to insure having a safe place to target shoot	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Nichols, Nick	<p>We appreciate the efforts that the USFS, Sheriff's Dept., gun club and others made this past Thursday to determine off-site gunfire sound levels on such short notice. We regret that observers did not get to several of the intended observation sites and that only 2 firearms were used (each sequentially firing 1 magazine). All observers at this location (8-9 persons?) could hear some gun fire. It didn't reflect actual worse-case range conditions with multiple weapons firing simultaneously when all foliage is off of the trees. We don't know what other observers would have recorded had they been in place</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
Nichols, Nick	<p>We respectfully request that the organizers and participants of this past event conduct a more comprehensive test with multiple (and louder) firearms with observers in place at the most likely impacted locations. With earlier notice other neighbors could see for themselves if they were going to have an issue with gunfire noise. If such a test were conducted all concerned would know if they were going to have an issue with the range at this location and perhaps whether noise mitigation at the range would isolate/reduce the impact on residents and forest users. Everyone would then know for sure where they stood on the noise issue.</p>	<p>Your request for information has been noted. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. A report from the two live firing test will be available in the project website.</p>
Nichols, Nick	<p>Please consider the following amended comments. They have been withheld while waiting for more complete information about the gun test and the proposed Union County Gun Club.</p>	<p>Your request for information has been noted. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. A report from the two live firing test will be available in the project website.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Nichols, Nick	I am a tax-paying, homesteaded resident of Union County Georgia. I am also a gun owner, member of the NRA and Chatuge Gun Club and frequent shooter at that range. I have always been able to find a "seat at that table" at that range. I still shoot the Remington .22 at the Chatuge range that my father taught me to shoot over 60 years ago.	Thank you for your comments.
Nichols, Nick	A gun range may be desirable in the proper place in Union County, provided that it does not infringe upon the rights and degrade the quality of life of existing legal residents, most of whom did not purchase their homes so that they could be near an active gun range.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Nichols, Nick	Had they desired this, they may have considered a location in S.W. Atlanta or similar area. My search took over two years; three states; reduced to three counties in N.E. Georgia, and finally limited to areas in Southern Union County in/adjacent to the national forests and hopefully wilderness areas to limit future adverse intrusions.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Nichols, Nick	This is not a situation where someone moved next to an airport, interstate, railroad, race track or stamping mill and then complained about the noise. The noise in those instances was there first and an existing condition. Nearby residents located in or near the forest/wilderness so that they would be buffered and protected from such future intrusions.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Nichols, Nick	<p>There are several hundred private properties within 3 miles of the proposed site and 40+ properties w/in 1.5+/- miles of site (20+/- homes). In the nearest, there are 14 houses/structures in Hoyt Alexander Subdivision (entrance road 1+/- mile from site). Three of the homes are full-time, occupied, homesteaded residences in Union County. In addition, there are 8 part time, seasonal, weekend, rental cabins/structures in the subdivision. The closest home (currently under construction) is less than 1 mile from the proposed range site. And, yes, I live in that house that is the often referred to by the gun club as: "the nearest house is a mile away."</p>	<p>The Forest Service has previously conducted a review of scientific literature and could not find research that provides a statistically valid link between shooting ranges and property values that supports the statement of negative affects.</p>
Nichols, Nick	<p>The Sole Commissioner stated at the recent Public Hearing that the "Forest would protect the gun range from outside intrusions". We thought the same when we purchased our homes to be protected by the Forest.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Nichols, Nick	<p>He also stated that locations within one mile of the Appalachian Trail were eliminated from consideration. This site is also adjacent to two federal wilderness areas: Brasstown Wilderness Area designated in 1986 and the Mark Trail Wilderness Area designated in 1991 by the Congress of the United States of America through the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Russell-Brasstown National Scenic Byway was designated by the Federal Highway Administration and Georgia Department of Transportation in 2000. How did these get over looked too?</p>	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Nichols, Nick	Gun-range noise is not restricted to within the boundaries of 14-acres of the proposed range. If noise is the primary objection of nearby residents of Union County (whom by definition, have a higher vested interest than the shooters), a live-fire noise test replicating actual range conditions needs to be conducted with observers at various locations (including the Appalachian Trail).	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Nichols, Nick	If the noise levels were low, maybe they could be eliminated or reduced by common noise mitigation measures to be included as permit conditions. If this can be achieved then maybe 90% of the objections can be eliminated and those objectors could become supporters or at least no longer be objectors.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Nichols, Nick	What noise mitigation and design measures is the gun club willing to implement to make it more acceptable to those that would be potentially impacted?	Thank you for your comments.
Nichols, Nick	The County and the Gun Club need to work WITH (not around) the USFS to develop a proper alternative site evaluation.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Nichols, Nick	<p>Issuance of a Special Use Permit requires that:</p> <p>"Normally, NFS land is not made available if the overall needs of the individual or business can be met on nonfederal lands".</p> <p>"1. Request must be consistent with laws, regulations, orders, policies of NFS lands, other federal laws, and applicable State and local health and sanitation laws".</p> <p>"2. Request must be consistent or made consistent with the standards and guidelines in the applicable Forest Land and Resource Management Plan".</p> <p>"3. Request must not pose serious or substantial risk to public health or safety".</p> <p>"4. Request must not require exclusive or perpetual right of use or occupancy.</p> <p>"5. Request does not unreasonably conflict or interfere with administrative uses, other scheduled or authorized existing uses, or use of adjacent non-NFS lands".</p>	Thank you for your comment.
Nichols, Nick	Establishment of a documented "Need" for the project.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Nichols, Nick	A scientific alternatives analysis (including alternative sites and "no-action").	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Nichols, Nick	<p>Please consider the following amended comments. They have been delayed while waiting for more complete information to be released regarding the proposed Union County Gun Club.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
Nichols, Nick	<p>I am a tax-paying, homesteaded resident of Union County Georgia. I am also a gun owner, member of the NRA and Chatuge Gun Club and frequent shooter at that range. I have always been able to find a "seat at that table" at that range. I still shoot the Remington .22 at the Chatuge range that my father taught to me to shoot over 60 years ago.</p> <p>A gun range may be desirable in the proper place in Union County, provided that it does not degrade the quality of life of existing legal residents, most of whom did not purchase their homes so that they could be near an active gun range. Had they desired this, they may have considered a location in S.W. Atlanta or similar area. My search took over two years; three states; reduced to three counties in N.E. Georgia, and finally limited to areas in Southern Union County in/adjacent to the national forests and hopefully wilderness areas to limit future adverse intrusions.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Nichols, Nick	<p>There are several hundred private properties within 3 miles of the proposed site and 40+ properties w/in 1.5+/- miles of site (20+/- homes). In the nearest, there are 14 houses/structures in Hoyt Alexander Subdivision (entrance road 1+/- mile from site). Three of the homes are full-time, occupied, homesteaded residences in Union County. In addition, there are 8 part time, seasonal, weekend, rental cabins/structures in the subdivision. The closest home (currently under construction) is less than 1 mile from the proposed range site</p>	<p>The Forest Service has previously conducted a review of scientific literature and could not find research that provides a statistically valid link between shooting ranges and property values that supports the statement of negative affects.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Nichols, Nick	He also stated that locations within one mile of the Appalachian Trail were eliminated from consideration. This site is also adjacent to two federal wilderness areas: Brasstown Wilderness Area designated in 1986 and the Mark Trail Wilderness Area designated in 1991 by the Congress of the United States of America through the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Russell-Brasstown National Scenic Byway was designated by the Federal Highway Administration and Georgia Department of Transportation in 2000. How did these get over looked too?	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Nichols, Nick	Gun-range noise does is not restricted to within the boundaries of 14-acres of the proposed range. If noise is the primary objection of nearby residents of Union County (whom by definition, have a higher vested interest than the shooters), a live-fire noise test replicating actual range conditions needs to be conducted with observers at various locations (including the Appalachian Trail). The date and time could be announced well in advance and residents and users of the wilderness or trail could be at their locations to see if they had a noise issue. If the noise levels were high, then all sides would know where they stand and what alternatives and/or actions might be available to each. If the converse were true, they would know that too	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Nichols, Nick	What noise mitigation and design measures is the gun club willing to implement to make it more acceptable to those that would be potentially impacted?	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Nichols, Nick	<p>If the noise levels were low, maybe they could be eliminated or reduced by common noise mitigation measures to be included as permit conditions. If this can be achieved then maybe 90% of the objections can be eliminated and those objectors could become supporters or at least no longer be objectors. The Gun Club Board needs to interact with the Forest Service and local community to reduce objections and perhaps arrive at a speedier agreeable conclusion, rather than let it drag on for 17-18 years like the Clay County Range that is so often cited. That site dragged on for so long because of objections over noise until an acceptable noise test was finally done and accepted by the courts. That permit has still not been issued.</p>	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Nichols, Nick	<p>What measures will the County undertake to encourage/enforce this shooting to take place at an approved range? What enforcement is the Forest Service willing to undertake to close constantly used informal shooting sites? If noise can be limited at an approved range, what measures will be undertaken to limit the uncontrolled and unsafe gunfire by the applicants for the range?</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
Nichols, Nick	<p>The County and the Gun Club need to work WITH (not around) the USFS to develop a proper alternative site evaluation. The USFS will be the agency that permits a gun range (if an acceptable location is found) and will be the agency that develops any lease.</p>	<p>Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Nichols, Nick	They ARE your partner. If the "NEPA Policy Act Handbook of the Forest Service" (FSH 1909.15 and revisions) policies and procedures are followed, a reasonable conclusion should be reached without using the implied threat of political intervention. This is a long-term commitment of publicly-owned USFS lands (resources of ALL of the people). NEPA process was legislated with that end in mind when using Federal funds or lands.	<p>Goal 31 of the Forest Plan of Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests directs us to <i>"Provide a spectrum of high quality, nature-based recreation settings and opportunities that reflect the unique or exceptional resources of the Forest and the interests of the recreating public on an environmentally sustainable, financially sound, and operationally effective basis. Adapt management of recreation facilities and opportunities as needed to shift limited resources to those opportunities"</i>.</p> <p>Authorization of a target range facilities is consistent with Forest Service policy (FSM 2335.4) when the use is 1) consistent with Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and 2) when the authorization would enhance forest management by improving public safety, providing recreational opportunities and consolidating dispersed target shooting. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The environmental analysis will include consideration of factors like public safety, potential noise from gunfire, heritage resource sites, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Nichols, Nick	<p>Issuance of a Special Use Permit requires that:</p> <p>"Normally, NFS land is not made available if the overall needs of the individual or business can be met on nonfederal lands".</p> <p>"1. Request must be consistent with laws, regulations, orders, policies of NFS lands, other federal laws, and applicable State and local health and sanitation laws".</p> <p>"2. Request must be consistent or made consistent with the standards and guidelines in the applicable Forest Land and Resource Management Plan".</p> <p>"3. Request must not pose serious or substantial risk to public health or safety".</p> <p>"4. Request must not require exclusive or perpetual right of use or occupancy.</p> <p>"5. Request does not unreasonably conflict or interfere with administrative uses, other scheduled or authorized existing uses, or use of adjacent non-NFS lands".</p>	<p>Goal 31 of the Forest Plan of Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests directs us to <i>"Provide a spectrum of high quality, nature-based recreation settings and opportunities that reflect the unique or exceptional resources of the Forest and the interests of the recreating public on an environmentally sustainable, financially sound, and operationally effective basis. Adapt management of recreation facilities and opportunities as needed to shift limited resources to those opportunities"</i>.</p> <p>Authorization of a target range facilities is consistent with Forest Service policy (FSM 2335.4) when the use is 1) consistent with Forest Plan standards and guidelines, and 2) when the authorization would enhance forest management by improving public safety, providing recreational opportunities and consolidating dispersed target shooting. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The environmental analysis will include consideration of factors like public safety, potential noise from gunfire, heritage resource sites, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Nichols, Nick	<p>Establishment of a documented "Need" for the project.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.</p>
Nichols, Nick	<p>A scientific alternatives analysis (including alternative sites and "no-action").</p>	<p>Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
O'Cleary, Chris	I oppose the Union County Target range	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
O'Sullivan, John	We should not place noisy activities like shooting guns near hiking trails, much less one of the most important hiking trails in the country. Noise is pollution.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Paris, Lamar	Union County does not have a public gun range. We may have as many shooters per capita as any county in Georgia. We have spent years trying to locate an area for shooting, but we have been unable to find one that does not negatively impact a neighborhood.	Thank you for your comments.
Paris, Lamar	The subject location is over a mile from a home. It is located within the National Forest with reasonable access from a state highway. The Union County Gun Club has been established to oversee the facility with the cooperation of Union County Government. Its longevity, safety and proper use are assured by the participation of Union County Government. I feel that this location will have the least impact of any area that could be reasonably used for this purpose.	Thank you for your comments.
Paris, Lamar	This will allow our citizens the opportunity to learn, practice or hone their skills while teaching our younger shooters the fine skills necessary to become a safe shooter. This is a desperate need in our county for this facility and we hope you will consider strongly allowing this facility to continue along the path of permitting and construction, knowing that it will be well run, safe, and an asset for our community.	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Parker, William	<p>I am in favor of the proposed Union County Target Range.</p> <p>The range will consist of 10 pistol ports and 13 rifle ports out to ranges of</p> <p>200 yards or more.</p> <p>The proposed club will also feature possible 4H bb teams and Air Rifle teams.</p> <p>Archery is a possibility depending on interest.</p> <p>This much needed club will also be available to Law Enforcement for their qualifying requirements.</p> <p>Various competition will be offered, depending on interest.</p> <p>This is a great undertaking carried out by a team of dedicated volunteers.</p> <p>Membership is said to be well over 400 at this time. All on faith this club will come to be.</p> <p>I support this very important addition to the many activities offered in Union County Ga.</p>	Thank you for your comments.
Parker, William	I am in favor of the proposed Union County Target Range.	Thank you for your comments.
Parker, William	<p>To those that oppose the Target range. I say this, 1st comments that the club could find other land suitable for a range. There is NO affordable land available in Union County. Forest Service land...Again there is nothing else available. If you look at the site map There will be very little clearing of trees for this project as the land had been used as a feed lot.</p>	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
	<p>Noise, Because of the forest and hills surrounding the proposed site there will be little noise pollution. Every effort has been made to have as little impact on the surrounding areas.</p> <p>Some have mentioned another gun range close to this proposed site. That club does not offer what the new club will offer, For example pistol range will have 10 ports out to d50 yards. The rifle range will have 13 ports out to a possible</p> <p>300 yards. Chatuge has 9 ports only out to 100 yards.</p> <p>The new club will have an indoor BB and air rifle range suitable for 4 H</p> <p>and possible air pistol matches.</p> <p>Archery as well as shot gun will also be possibilities in the near future.</p> <p>This club will have organized competitive pistol and rifle matches of different types. As well as metallic silhouette matches.</p> <p>As a Board member of this club we have worked very hard to meet the needs of our neighbors in the area and our 400 plus Members who we thank for their support for a club with no area to shoot. We thank them for their faith in us the Board of the Union County gun club as well as our Advisor in this project</p> <p>Sheriff Mack Mason, who with out his support this project</p>	

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Patterson, Cynthia	<p>would have not come to be.</p> <p>I oppose locating a 15-acre shooting range off highway 180 in Union County.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>
Patterson, Cynthia	<p>Is a second shooting range necessary? The Chatuge Gun Club Range is also on US Forest Service land, 3 miles away from the proposed range.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.</p>
Patterson, Cynthia	<p>I hike the Appalachian Trail in that area. The sound of gunshots is not compatible with hiking in a wilderness area.</p>	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Paycher, Steven	<p>I AM NOT HAPPY ABOUT THIS PROPOSED TARGET RANGE.</p> <p>We just bought our home in June of this year, and chose it because it is in a very quiet and peaceful area.</p> <p>I would not be happy to hear gun shots.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>
Peters, Nicholas	<p>I would vote NO, on this project.</p> <p>First off, let me state that I am a huge advocate for the second amendment, and individual rights. I feel that with the amount of Public Land in the area, it would be a great idea to have a Public Shooting Range for individuals to be able to practice safe firearm usage.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Peters, Nicholas	However, I am totally against the way this project was proposed, and how it is being spearheaded.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Peters, Nicholas	1. This is Public Lands. It belongs to the People. I do not understand how a private organization can come in and annex a piece of federally owned land that is for Public Use, and make it Members Only. Sure, the public will be granted a small window to be able to use it, just like over at the Chatuge Gun Club, but only allowing the public 2 hours a month isn't exactly welcoming. If you want to make it a Public Gun Range, I would be all for it, but Privatizing Federal Lands should be illegal. What would be stopping the Boy Scouts of America to then ask for 20 acres to expand their adjacent summer camp? Or the Girl Scouts? Or Union County officials? Where do you draw the line? By allowing this to happen, you will set a precedence that anyone can annex Public Lands for Private Use if they can claim "it's for public safety" or that "there is a real need for (fill in the blank) in the area." And just because an individual has a connection in higher government doesn't give them a free pass over others... that is the definition of Corruption. If The Union County Gun Club gets this range approved for their personal usage, then in the fairness of Individual Rights, every citizen should be able to claim a piece of Public Land for Private Usage.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Peters, Nicholas	<p>2. Why is the Forest Service being forced to pay for the NEPA (National Environmental Protection Act)? Their budgets have already been slashed numerous times, some of their offices can't even buy paper and ink for the printers, and now you are forcing them to foot the bill on the Environmental Studies. Why can't the Gun Club pay for their own Environmental Studies? This cost should not be funded by the American People for the benefit of a Private Members Only club.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
Peters, Nicholas	<p>3. There is already a Gun Club a few miles down the road. As I stated before, I am against Privatizing Public Lands, and the Chatuge Gun Club is exactly that, but why can't the Union County Peace Officers use that range for their trainings and qualifications? Especially since it is only 3.39 miles away, as the crow flies, from the proposed new shooting range. Is it really necessary to take lands from the public to install another range in close proximity, just because people can't share??? As the project sits, unaltered, this is a total waste of tax payer money on a redundant shooting range.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>
Peters, Nicholas	<p>The only way I would be in favor of this project is if the shooting range were to be made usable to ALL people without a membership fee. If you were to make it a day use area and charge the standard \$5 per visit, I would still be in favor of the project. If you need examples of these sites, the Nantahala National Forest in North Carolina has several public shooting ranges to mirror off of. But taking Public Lands that belong to the People and making it usable by Members Only should NEVER happen.</p>	<p>Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Pirie, Caroline	I would like for my grandchildren to learn how to safely use a gun. Both of my Sons are law enforcement Officers, but there is nowhere near us to train the kids in the proper way to operate a gun. The youth of this country need this range to respect the 2nd amendment right that they have. I appreciate the work that is being done to accomplish this .	Thank you for your comments.
Pruett, Steven	As an avid outdoors enthusiast, and member of two local hiking clubs, I object to the addition of another shooting range.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Pruett, Steven	This especially because the proposed site is within hearing distance of two preserves, including near the AT.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Pruett, Steven	Let's look at other sites, which would be more appropriate.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Pruitt, Samuel	I strongly support this proposal. There is a lack of shooting ranges within the region. Providing a safe and secure place where all can enjoy their firearms is essential to the community.	Thank you for your comments.
Puckett, Carolyn	I oppose the building of a shooting range so close to wilderness area and the appalachian trail because of the noise pollution.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Puckett, Carolyn	Noise has been shown to have adverse affects on wildlife, especially birds. Also, the noise will no doubt be heard by campers and hikers. There is very little area in the eastern U.S. where one is free from obnoxious noise.	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors noise, anticipated effects to wildlife and threatened/endangered plant and animal species.</p> <p>Concerns regarding wildlife. This is not a key issue because it is not supported by scientific research (Larkin, 1996, Doresky, et al., 2001). Most research on sound impacts to wildlife has addressed issues in aquatic environments, especially as they affect wildlife behavior and communication. Doresky, et al. (2001), however, report that federally-endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers exhibit no response to training activities, including gunfire, on a military base. Based on these studies and experience with other public shooting facilities, the Forest Service concludes that some wildlife species would acclimate to the new conditions and others would adjust by avoiding the area when users are present and that the range would not have an appreciably negative impact on wildlife.</p>
Ranallo, Rocco	What about the decrease in the property value due to the fact that land near a shooting range will be devalued thus costing the tax payers and land owners in these areas lots of money. This burden should not be footed by land owners in this area.	The Forest Service has previously conducted a review of scientific literature and could not find research that provides a statistically valid link between shooting ranges and property values that supports the statement of negative affects.
Ranallo, Rocco	This is excessive noise	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Ranallo, Rocco	reason why this range,should not be built at this location.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Ratowt, Sylwester	I would like to object to allowing a shooting range in such a short distance from the AT.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Ratowt, Sylwester	My understanding is that there is another shooting range near by thus making this one redundant	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Rauch, Donald	My reasons for the target range are as follows: Law enforcement officers in Blàirsville and Union County need a facility to practice and to do their State qualifications. We need a safe place to train the children of the county in the safe handling of firearms. As a kid growing up in farm country in northern Ohio, we were able to take our rifles to the high school for that purpose. The school also had a practice range for us to practice at and it came in handy during the hunting season. I have guns that I cannot use since I moved into the county since there is no place close by for me to target practice or sight in my scopes. The DNR has set up a special training facility in Oregon that teaches blind people how to cope with a firearm. That could be used in Union County since the populace is made up of retired older people. As you can see, I am in favor of this practice range and as a member of the Union County Gun Club, I would have a safe place to practice with the firearms I currently own.	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Rauch, Karen	I am a member of the Union County Gun Club. I am very much in favor of the site selected for the range for Union County Gun Club. We need a range in Union County where we can practice with our guns. I would like to be able to improve my accuracy for self defense and for just the sport of shooting. The range will provide a safe place for our police to maintain their required maintenance shooting. It will also be a place to educate our youth and also the many older citizens who wish to learn more accurate shooting practices. We will also have classes in Basic safety- which is so important to those just learning the sport. It is important to have a place to legally practice. It will enable education for groups like Women on Target to train those who wish to learn self protection, it will provide a place for Veterans to continue their love for training others to shoot well. We are an area where we support our rights of the second amendment and need this range. I pray everything goes smoothly in the required testing and environmental testing so that we can proceed with this very needed facility. You can see by the numbers already enrolled in the Union County Gun. Club, without even a range , that it is gong to be a viable club and is much needed and wanted.	Thank you for your comments.
Raus, Rick	The more open area firearms ranges, the better! In this day and age, our youth need places like this! Thank You, Rick Raus	Thank you for your comments.
Reece, Richard	I am located on Williams Drive. As I understand it, I am probably one of the closest houses. The wife and I are strong second amendment supporters. We own firearms. We have used and will continue to use the service of ranges, so we are not anti gun or anti range.	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Reece, Richard	We do however have a concern about the noise. We do not want to hear it. It sounds like there is going to be a serious look at the noise issue and I think that it will probably be resolved.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Reece, Richard	If we cannot hear it then we are not against it. When the noise study is done, it should be done firing the largest caliber/noisiest firearm that will be allowed at the proposed range in order to be fair. It should also be done at the time of the year that allows the most sound travel, which I would think would be winter, since the leaves would have fallen. Thank you for allowing comments.	Thank you for your comments.
Reece, Richard	What firearm will be used for the live-fire test at the proposed range site on November 8, 2018?	Your request for information has been noted. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. A report from the two live firing test will be available in the project website.
Refete, Mark	I believe that this facility will have a negative impact on other users nearby, including hunters, hikers, campers, and those exploring the nearby Wilderness Areas.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Refete, Mark	<p>I am a hunter, fisherman, hiker, camper, and nature explorer. There is a place for the wide range of outdoor activities that the population enjoys, and this is not a good location for this project. There is already a shooting range within 5 miles of this proposed location and there is no legitimate reason to add another so close to the AT and Wilderness Areas. There are a number of WMAs located in the county further away from the AT and Wilderness Areas and are better choices for a shooting range.</p>	<p>Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.</p>
Reyes, Abraham	<p>Hello ! As a 2A supporter, carry license holder (and EDC citizen), and 2A enthusiast. I STONGLY support and encourage the existence and further development of safe, fun, and professional gun ranges. However, there is a purpose and place for everything. And as a fellow hiker who Georgian, I don't believe a range so close to the AT is the best place for a professional gun zone. There is little places in our state where we can all go get away and enjoy the peace of nature. And I'm and around the AT is one of them. The range is a great idea. But somewhere not in close proximity to the trail would be best.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
Rhodes, Denny	<p>Safety: As best as I can determine, the Appalachian Trail would be in defilade from the firing line. An errant round from a hunting or assault type rifle that cleanly cleared Turkeypen Mountain Would pass over the Trail. A muzzle elevation of more than about 8° would do that. The same cannot be said of a handgun or a round from a rifle that that struck vegetation at the top of the mountain. In the latter case, it would likely become unstable and fall short of full range. Murphy's Law should be given full consideration</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Rhodes, Denny	Noise (unwanted sound): Reactions to the sound of gunfire can range from irritation to fear. That should not be a part of the Appalachian Trail experience. Considering data about the intensity of the sound of the reports of firearms, and crunching numbers, I am confident the noise could be heard at the trail.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Rhodes, Denny	The proposed location of the range is incompatible with the Appalachian Trail. Please consider another location.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Rhodes, Denny	I object to the proposed gun range in Union County for two independent reasons, safety	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Rhodes, Denny	noise	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Rhodes, Denny	<p>In 2014, anniversary year of the Wilderness Act, I did some research on the AT in designated Wilderness. The section on the AT between Hogpen Gap and Unicoi Gap is not only the longest section of the AT in Wilderness in Georgia, it was at that time the longest section of the AT in Wilderness from Springer Mountain to Mount Katahdin, the northern terminus. If the Union County gun range project goes forward at the proposed site, the "untrammelled by man" experience of Wilderness will be fouled along the Appalachian National Scenic Trail down range, and in both the nearby Brasstown and Mark Trail Wilderness Areas.</p>	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Rhodes, Denny	<p>The site for the Union County Gun Range is poorly chosen for reasons mentioned above and others not mentioned.</p>	<p>Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.</p>
Rhodes, Lois	<p>My objections to Union County Target Range Project #54559 are based primarily on the safety to hikers, and to the quality of their wilderness experience.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Rhodes, Lois	<p>The Appalachian Trail runs through the Mark Trail Wilderness above and beyond the proposed gun range. It is within range of errant rifle rounds that may ricochet and tumble toward hikers. The risk may be small, but the risk to hikers does exist, and it is an unnecessary risk.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Rhodes, Lois	Hikers come from all over the world to hike the iconic Appalachian Trail. The noise from the target range will negatively impact their experience.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.
Rhodes, Lois	The Jacks Knob Trail connects the Appalachian Trail to Brasstown Bald, and crosses the Richard Russell Highway, passing near the gun range. Hikers on this trail would also be subject to the same risks and noise levels as those on the Appalachian Trail.	<p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p> <p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p>
Rhodes, Lois	The gun range would be very near the Mark Trail Wilderness (about a quarter mile downrange) and would also be very near the Brasstown Wilderness and the Richard Russell Scenic Highway. The Wilderness Act specifies that these areas are set aside as "untrammled by man." The noise from the gun range would certainly be a violation of that requirement.	<p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p> <p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Riley, Patrick	This range opens up numerous opportunity for structured shooting. Currently there are no firing ranges in the area that offer much for structured environments for firing at longers distances. It allows it's users to have a safe and semi-formal environment to practice both rifle and pistol firing. It would be a shame for this range to not come into fruition. I strongly support the construction of this range and the potential training it will unlock for follow-on generations.	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Roesel, Cindy	I enjoy hiking in the area when able. Getting out on a trail calms me, helps breathing and heart irregularity (a medical condition I have). That may be another way of saying reduces stress - I just know it makes a magical difference. I sometimes walk closer to home at Davidson Arabia Mountain. They have a shooting range which is heard from the trail. It is a police range so I am sure it is save but the sound of shooting puts me in a fight or flight mode that takes away the joy of being there. Please do not do this to a place as outstanding as your site.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Roshaven, Wayne	I am in favor of this proposed target range. Of the two ranges in nearby counties, Chatuge already is crowded with more than 800 members, and Panther Top is unsupervised with marginal safety. More than 400 people have expressed enough interest in the proposed range to join the Union County Gun Club on faith, which certainly expresses interest in a range in Union County.	Thank you for your comments.
Roshaven, Wayne	At present, the only other option for folks who want to keep their skills sharp is to shoot in their backyards, or in the National Forest, neither of which is safe.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Roshaven, Wayne	The proposed target range will be built and operated with safety in mind, with adequate berms to contain projectiles within the confines of the range, and range safety officers to enforce a high degree of safety.	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Roshaven, Wayne	Prior to the issuance of a special use permit, environmental studies and sound studies will be conducted to gauge the impact on the environment. The special use permit will only be issued if these studies determine that the environmental impact is minimal. Hikers on the Appalachian Trail will most likely hear no more gunfire than they do now, only the gunfire will be more safely confined and controlled.	Thank you for your comments.
Roshaven, Wayne	As a direct result of opening this range, the safety of the public will be enhanced, local law enforcement officers will have a place to qualify without having to travel out of the county, and youth safety programs will have a place to flourish. With the population of this area growing rapidly, this range has become a necessary resource.	Thank you for your comments.
ROTH, NERISSA	I hike on the Appalachian Trail right next to this proposed shooting range multiple times a week. I live very close to it too, in fact I bought a home in Suches to be as close to the trail as possible. I am gravely concerned about stray bullets maiming or killing me while I hike, my friends and relatives, or the other Appalachian Trail hikers and enthusiasts who bring in important tourist dollars to our small community, and fear the startling and terrifying thunder of shots destroying the peace of the woods and the enjoyment of the beloved wild and quiet trail that I moved here to be near.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
ROTH, NERISSA	I and the rest of my household vehemently oppose the approval or construction of any type of gun range this close to a national scenic trail.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Sada, Pierre	It seems like a great plan. This will improve safety concerns for the public. I'm always concerned about other outdoor enthusiast, random target shooting when out in these beautiful lands. The proposed cost sharing concept with the different entities seems brilliant while the title will remain with the Federal Government, I'm assuming USDA, Forest Service. Definitely a Win/Win	Thank you for your comments.
Sada, Pierre	I am taking this opportunity to commend the concept, and the effort by all involved in developing the Union County Target Range. I believe it to be a good plan. The gains in safety issues alone, warrant serious consideration of authorizing construction of the target range. The random, unaccounted target shooting that happens in the surrounding lands should decrease with a comfortable, new target range. This safe, sound and secure recreational facility will serve Union County and its encircling neighbors well.	Thank you for your comments.
Sada, Pierre	Partnering up with Union County and an established Gun Club is the formula needed for success. Professional at every level. The County will construct the Target Range, be the primary permit holder and be responsible for funding, maintenance and general operation. The Union County Gun Club will be in charge of the day to day operation of the Target Range. All entities will be performing in areas of their strengths and success. The County, funding and building, and the Gun Club, business of running a target range. It is refreshing to see a plan be logical.	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Sampson, Peggysue	As a female shooter, I feel this range is needed in order to allow me to improve my skills, teach the next generation about gun safety and the fun of competing in various shooting events. Without a range to practice on, all of this is at best more difficult than if there was a facility such as this one readily available to the citizens of Union County. Union County needs this facility to accommodate the residents on the county without forcing us to go elsewhere, build this range to keep oour citizens and money here locally	Thank you for your comments.
Sampson, William	This project is not only desired, but a necessity for Union County. Residents of Union County and more importantly, the the local police, both retired and active do not have a place to qualify annually, which is required by law. It is imperative to insure that LEOs have a place to qualify to maintain a safe community for all residents and citizens to have a place where proper gun safety can be utilized and taught to future generations. This range will provide a place to practice longer range shooting for everyone and can only serve to enhance the skills and safety methods utilized by competent citizens.	Thank you for your comments.
Seabolt, Jerry	I oppose the development of a gun range at this location.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Seabolt, Jerry	First, the quality of the Mark Trail Wilderness will be materially degraded with the introduction of the gunfire noise. We all share a desire and mandate to, as a minimum, maintain the current quality of this wilderness area by avoiding management activities that will lead to quality reduction.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Seabolt, Jerry	the hiking experience on the Appalachian Trail will be significantly reduced.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Seabolt, Jerry	The US Forest Service owns thousands of acres in Union County and surely there must be sites where the impact is not so great. If your agency is unable to identify an appropriate alternative site, then you should require the enclosure of the range and the use of materials to absorb and mitigate the sound as one might find in developed municipal areas.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Seehorn, Monte	This is an excellent project and should serve the local and surrounding communities well.	Thank you for your comments.
Seehorn, Monte	People from a few organizations such as ForestWatch will likely oppose the project because gunfire might possibly be heard at some point a mile or so away on the Appalachian Trail or in a designated Wilderness Area. Frankly, it would be hard to find a location on this Ranger District, in which a gunshot could not be heard from some point on the Trail or in a Wilderness Area. Hopefully, you will serve the County's interest and needs by approving the project.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Seehorn, Terry	I want to strongly urge you to proceed with this shooting g range. Opportunities to shoot are too few. I am an avid backpacker and have no objections to this type of activity. Thank you for your efforts to balance recreational activities among ALL USERS and not just an elite group of wilderness promoting exclusionists.	Thank you for your comments.
Seng, Erin	I am against The Union County Target Range Project.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Seng, Erin	It is not necessary or desired because of the closeness of the other Target Range.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Seng, Erin	Our natural beauty, in this area' should be treasured and protected not only the scenery but the quiet. Sound travels quite far and would disturb people as well as wildlife.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Seng, Erin	Find another location farther away from the AT and other places of peace and quiet.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Shenefield, Jordan	1) Sound (specifically gunshots). I am the trail maintainer for the Jacks Knob Trail to Chattahoochee Gap and Appalachian Trail northbound from Chattahoochee Gap. This is wilderness area where the 1964 Wilderness Act specifically calls for solitude. Gunshots are not solitude. Therefore, this gun range permit should be denied.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Shenefield, Jordan	2) Bullets. It is possible that a gun fired at the proposed range could project a bullet to Chattahoochee Gap (and the trails leading into the gap). This is EXTREMELY dangerous. Therefore, this gun range permit should be denied.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Shivar, Nathan	I believe that the facility would have a permanent negative impact on other users nearby, including hunters, hikers, and those exploring the nearby Wilderness Areas. Due to the location, the negative impacts would be hard to mitigate.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Shivar, Nathan	I do support & encourage shooting & range use in the National Forest, but the nearby Chatuge Gun Club is already well-established and in a better location to serve shooting range demand.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Shivar, Nathan	Please reject the plan as proposed and work with the end-users (rather than the county government) to find a more appropriate solution.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Siemianowski, Thomas & Dorothy	Among our concerns are the metal contamination of soil affecting water quality to lower areas flowing south and west	If the proposed action is selected, an Environmental Stewardship Plan will be developed that contains an action plan and best management practices for managing lead accumulation, abatement and removal. Based on similar action plans implemented at Forest Service Target Ranges within the region and others located within the state, lead management procedures have worked as intended.
Siemianowski, Thomas & Dorothy	the danger of the close proximity to the Appalachian Trail for both hikers, visitors and residents;	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Siemianowski, Thomas & Dorothy	the negative impact on wildlife and the natural surroundings of the National Forest; and the close proximity to our neighborhood, which is not only threatening and noisy but will negatively affect our safety and peaceful way of life.	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors noise, anticipated effects to wildlife and threatened/endangered plant and animal species.</p> <p>Concerns regarding wildlife. This is not a key issue because it is not supported by scientific research (Larkin, 1996, Doresky, et al., 2001). Most research on sound impacts to wildlife has addressed issues in aquatic environments, especially as they affect wildlife behavior and communication. Doresky, et al. (2001), however, report that federally-endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers exhibit no response to training activities, including gunfire, on a military base. Based on these studies and experience with other public shooting facilities, the Forest Service concludes that some wildlife species would acclimate to the new conditions and others would adjust by avoiding the area when users are present and that the range would not have an appreciably negative impact on wildlife.</p>
Skeen, Marianne	While I am supportive of having shooting ranges available in support of gun safety and to provide recreational opportunities, I think the location that is proposed for this project has serious problems.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Skeen, Marianne	The location is situated between two federally designated Wilderness areas. A prime feature of Wilderness areas is a sense of solitude. The location is also very close to the Appalachian National Scenic Trail.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Skeen, Marianne	Given that people using the A.T. as well as other areas in the nearby Wilderness are in an area of low background noise and anticipated solitude, this annoyance becomes more significant and possibly very frightening. Bursts of continual noise over long periods are even more annoying than isolated shots.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.
Smith, Karen	I would like to register my objection to the creation of a shooting range in Union county,	The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Smith, Karen	primarily because of its proximity to the Appalachian Trail. I think that the shooting range will have a negative impact on hiking tourism in the area as well; no one will want to hike near the shooting range.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Smith, Karen	It also seems to be a redundant project, since there is a range already located nearby in Towns county.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Smith, Karen	It also seems to be a redundant project, since there is a range already located nearby in Towns county.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Smith, William	The great attraction of our national forests is not only the beauty of the landscapes but the peace and QUIET to be found there. The forest is a refuge from the inhuman noise of cities and traffic: of our industrial civilization. The last thing we wish to hear while hiking in the woods would be the incessant racket of numerous firearms discharging without cease. The occasional report of a hunter's bullet, in season, is easily dismissed: a shooting range would bring none-stop noise.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Smith, William	My family and I would like to see all of our National Forest areas, and especially our nearby Chattahoochee forests, preserved for those seeking peace and quiet in nature. There's no reason the Union County Gun Club cannot acquire private land, elsewhere, on which to situate their desired range. The National Forest lands are part of the patrimony of all U.S. citizens, and should not be parceled out to private interests.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Smythe, J.	I am a homesteaded resident, registered voter, gun owner and Carry Permit holder living in Union County, Georgia. The map shows the Chatuge Gun Range is 3 miles from this site. Another gun range at this location is unnecessary and would be a public nuisance at the expense of legal land owners and users of the adjacent forest and Appalachian Trail.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Smythe, J.	<p>Union County is submitting a permit for 100-year site lease to be managed by the private membership, Union Co. Gun Club while Union County is responsible and liable for the gun range for 100 years. Union Co. has suggested using SPLOST County funds to construct a private membership range. Union County recently proposed raising the millage (taxes) because of tax shortfall. The pending SPLOST Amendment does not list the use of SPLOST funds to permit and construct private-membership gun-range on public lands using these public funds. Perhaps a positive vote for the SPLOST Amendment needs to be reconsidered by the taxpayers of Union County.</p>	Thank you for your comment.
Smythe, J.	This site is a bad idea.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Smythe, J.	<p>This site is in the Russell-Brasstown Scenic Byway and the Appalachian Trail is 1 mile down range. The Mark Trail Wilderness Area is ½ mile away and the Brasstown Wilderness Area across Highway 180. These are important economic assets to Union County. This site is not compatible with these uses. The County/club needs to work with the USFS to find an alternative site.</p>	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Smythe, J.	<p>This proposal is not appropriate at this location and a questionable use of public funds/resources. Alternative locations need to be found.</p>	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Sommerville, Morgan	<p>this is the response of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy to your request for comments regarding the proposed Union County Target Range Project. As a former federal law enforcement officer, and hunter, I clearly understand, and support, the need for gun use training and target practice. As the owner of property near a gun range that is topographically screened from my property I am very familiar with the potential noise disturbance caused by a gun range.</p>	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Sommerville, Morgan	<p>on the maps you have supplied with the scoping notice the rifle range is pointed directly at the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. Much of the 1.2 mile section of the A.T. from Cold Springs Gap to Chattahoochee Gap is likely protected from stray shots by Turkeypen Mountain. However, a shot through the vicinity of Turkeypen Gap on the south side of Turkeypen Mountain could reach the A.T., and a stray shot to the north of Turkeypen Mountain could reach the Jacks Knob A.T. access trail. How would this be prevented?</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Sommerville, Morgan	<p>due to the alignment of the range the noise generated by gun shots, which may often occur in rapid succession and continue over several hours, are likely to introduce both an unacceptable level of noise disturbance to A.T. users in their passage through the Mark Trail Wilderness and significant concern by A.T. hikers that they are in danger of being shot.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>
Sommerville, Morgan	<p>It has been stated that the nearby Chatuge Gun Club range is not long enough to accommodate rifles. What is the feasibility of extending the length of this range to satisfy this concern? It faces away from the A.T. at about twice the distance from the Trail as the proposed new range, and seems like a good alternative to the proposed range pointed at the A.T. - a heavily used recreational facility. Thus far, I am unaware of any complaints from A.T. hikers about noise from the Chatuge Gun Club range.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.</p>
Sommerville, Morgan	<p>Are there other alternative sites in Union County that could provide a better win/win location for a Union County gun range? I have heard rumors that there may be a suitable site in the Cooper Creek area.</p>	<p>Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Sommerville, Morgan	this is the response of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy to your request for comments regarding the proposed Union County Target Range Project. As a former federal law enforcement officer, and hunter, I clearly understand, and support, the need for gun use training and target practice. As the owner of property near a gun range that is topographically screened from my property I am very familiar with the potential noise disturbance caused by a gun range.	Thank you for your comments.
Sommerville, Morgan	on the maps you have supplied with the scoping notice the rifle range is pointed directly at the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. Much of the 1.2 mile section of the A.T. from Cold Springs Gap to Chattahoochee Gap is likely protected from stray shots by Turkeypen Mountain. However, a shot through the vicinity of Turkeypen Gap on the south side of Turkeypen Mountain could reach the A.T., and a stray shot to the north of Turkeypen Mountain could reach the Jacks Knob A.T. access trail. How would this be prevented?	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Sommerville, Morgan	due to the alignment of the range the noise generated by gun shots, which may often occur in rapid succession and continue over several hours, are likely to introduce both an unacceptable level of noise disturbance to A.T. users in their passage through the Mark Trail Wilderness and significant concern by A.T. hikers that they are in danger of being shot.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Sommerville, Morgan	It has been stated that the nearby Chatuge Gun Club range is not long enough to accommodate rifles. What is the feasibility of extending the length of this range to satisfy this concern? It faces away from the A.T. at about twice the distance from the Trail as the proposed new range, and seems like a good alternative to the proposed range pointed at the A.T. - a heavily used recreational facility. Thus far, I am unaware of any complaints from A.T. hikers about noise from the Chatuge Gun Club range.	Thank you for your comment. Different alternatives will be evaluated in the Environmental Assessment.
Sommerville, Morgan	Are there other alternative sites in Union County that could provide a better win/win location for a Union County gun range? I have heard rumors that there may be a suitable site in the Cooper Creek area.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Spetnagel, Theodore	I object to the use of public lands for target ranges. This is the type of facility that the private sector can fund and maintain on private land.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Spetnagel, Theodore	1. using a baffled range that has a roof to prevent someone at the firing position from firing a round that would land outside the range area.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
stege, Kathy	It is quite an international tourist destination, and brings lots of money to the Georgia mountain communities. This proposed target range is too close to the AT and wilderness areas. The guns would create noise pollution. I could support the project if all shooting is done with silencers so that no sound is heard anywhere in the wilderness or on the AT	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Stevens, Roy	I highly approve and support this project.	Thank you for your comments.
Straub, Rick	<p>I highly approve and request this project be approved.</p> <p>I am a resident of Union County in favor of a shooting range as proposed by project 54559.</p> <p>Union County is a mountainous area and from the counties inception hunters and enthusiasts have fired weapons all over the map. Its time to focus on a designated location that can promote gun safety, education, supervision and insure professional procedures are in use. I don't feel this use of a small piece of land will affect anyone's ability to enjoy the other forest areas.</p> <p>Safety:</p> <p>I believe I am like many who have not had formal firearm training. The proposed project will make resources available, to me and others, a safe professional place to shoot and ask questions from the experienced, certified trainers.</p> <p>I hear guns go off periodically and in fact I have shot weapons on my property, not only for fun but to insure proper operation. A shooting rage would reduce the amount of random firing while requiring the use of protective gear and safety procedures.</p> <p>Going off into the woods to shoot is not always the safest practice. Planning and going to a range for this specific</p>	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Strickland, Ken	<p>purpose is something we in this county desperately need. Blowing off rounds randomly is not as safe or as enjoyable as using targets at specified distance to gain experience.</p> <p>Education:</p> <p>Many people feel they know how to shoot guns when all they have to do is buy one. The proposed range will have professional, certified trainers available to help folks learn.</p> <p>Our children need a facility for learning proper firearm use as do us older folks. What better place to learn and enjoy a shooting sport than a professionally run facility.</p> <p>In my opinion having a facility close by in this county will foster better relations between gun owners, law enforcement and the Forestry service.</p> <p>I am opposed to the proposed Union County Target Range because of its proximity to the iconic Appalachian Trail and the nearby Wilderness Areas. I, plus my wife and friends and many others, often hike and backpack in the area and feel that the closeness of the proposed shooting range is very much out of place. I have enjoyed the National Forest in our area in a leave no trace and low impact manner for the last forty plus years.</p>	<p>The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Swegheimer, Luz	I do not agree with the Union County Target Range Project. I fear my property is susceptible to noise pollution due to the proximity of the range.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.
Swegheimer, Luz	Furthermore, I do not believe in the deforestation of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests for the construction of the shooting range. The risks to the forest and its ecosystem is too great to merit a 15 acre shooting range.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Thompson, Darlene	I am in favor of the shooting range being located in Union County, GA. I am a member of the newly established UC Gun Club. I believe in the rights of U.S. citizens to bear arms. I also believe in the responsibility that right entails. To know about guns and to be able to use them in a safe way, such as hunting and target shooting. I believe a range in our county would benefit our citizens by providing a safe place to target shoot and a place where our young people from 4H to school clubs can learn about guns and shoot in a safe environment. I also believe that we owe it to our law enforcement officials to provide a range where they can practice to keep up their certification without having to travel to another county's facilities. I think the use of this property in the National Forest will be put to good public use.	Thank you for your comments.
Thompson, John	I'm writing to object to Union County Target Range Project #54559.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Thompson, John	I do not feel that this project is not in the public interest, which is a second-level screening criteria for Special Use proposals.	Thank you for your comment.
Thompson, John	I recognize the county has a need, but this does not mean the Forest Service is required to encumber NFS lands to suit their needs. The county must exhaust all other options (including purchasing their own land, locating it on state lands, or locating it on private lands), before the Forest Service should entertain the idea of a shooting range. The CFR's also state that price tag for looking at those other options is not to be factored into the decision making. In the scoping letter, I didn't see proof that all non-NFS options have been exhausted.	Thank you for your comment.
Thompson, John	This should be treated like any other special use proposal. I also worry about initial screening number IV, which states that a proposal should not create an exclusive or perpetual right of use or occupancy. While I understand that Special Use permits have time limits, the reality is that once this is authorized, it's nearly impossible to remove if they are compliant with the terms and conditions in their permit or the county decides it no longer wants it. In a sense, the Forest is creating a defacto exclusive use (and one that could net \$0 in Cost Recovery and Land Use fees).	Thank you for your comment.
Thompson, John	Noise pollution could impact this experience.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Thompson, John	In short, I believe the county should look elsewhere and prove to the Forest that there is not one other viable option in the entire country, including private property or state lands, before the Forest should accept this proposal as an application. I therefore object to this proposal.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Thompson, Sidney	I am in favor of this gun range and give it my full support. As a gun owner it would be advantageous to have a safe place to practice with my firearms. As a resident of Union County it would help that I do not have to travel to other counties or even out of state to practice.	Thank you for your comments.
Thomson, Brian	I live 2.1 miles (straight line) from the proposed target range location and am concerned about the possibility of noise from the run range reaching my neighborhood.	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p> <p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p>
Thomson, Brian	The sound of constant gunfire from the range would certainly impact the peaceful environment of my neighborhood and potentially affect property values and resale.	The Forest Service has previously conducted a review of scientific literature and could not find research that provides a statistically valid link between shooting ranges and property values that supports the statement of negative affects.
Thomson, Brian	Is there any plan to run some actual gunfire tests (pistols, rifles) to allow residents living in the proposed area of the range to determine the actual noise impact, or lack of, where they live?	Your request for information has been noted. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. A report from the two live firing test will be available in the project website.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
tootle, foy	This project is an unnecessary and unacceptable addition to the noise pollution and intrusion on the Appalachian Trail, and other wilderness areas nearby, for those of us seeking the invaluable solace and peace of a wilderness experience.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
tootle, foy	More gunfire in this area is not conducive to the safety and serenity of the wildlife and the humans that live and recreate in these special and dwindling areas.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Tribble, William	AS retired LEO, it is an annual requirement that I qualify at a range. Currently, I must travel to do that. With this range located in Union County, I will be able to qualify locally and maintain my current status. Union County LEO, whether active or retired need a local range to use for both qualifying and practice.	Thank you for your comments.
Van den akker, Mitchell	Given there is already a range I do not believe the zoning for this project is healthy for the environment and tourism on the AT and surrounding areas.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Van den akker, Mitchell	The noise pollution will disturb wildlife and people alike. I am against this proposal and feel it would be better served in an area not so close to this natural habitat.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Van den akker, Mitchell	There should be another place that can accommodate shooters to enjoy the range, but not in earshot of the AT, as the wildlife is becoming encroached on more and more each day, it could drive animals out of the woods and in the paths of motor vehicles on the roads and the city. Please consider the consequences of placing this range here, the negative externality will be heard for years to come and not be worth it down the pipeline. We must be conscientious to the impacts this will have on other people, future generations and the animals. These habitats are home to some m endangered animals and we should not disturb their natural way of life.	Alternative sites have been addressed in the EA.
Vandewiele, Laura	I am opposed to the Union County Shooting Range.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Vandewiele, Laura	The fact that there is another shooting range within 4 miles of the proposed project suggests that this is a waste of taxpayer money.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Vandewiele, Laura	As a hiker and nature explorer, I have hiked near a shooting range and find it scary to be so close to guns going off repeatedly.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Von hof, Hunter	During your live fire I stood on my porch on 3027 ga hwy 180 and heard shooting, I continued to f.c.collins drive where I also heard shots clearly, my wife stood at von Hof drive which are our rental properties and heard shots clear as a bell. Our tenant at 3159 hwy 180 also heard shots. My concern is when you have a number of people shooting all day the noise will be a nuscense.	The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan. The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Walker, Larry	I favor the proposed shooting range	Thank you for your comments.
Walston, Lynn	I strongly object to a shooting range constructed so close to the CHattahoochee National Forest hiking areas: less than one mile from the Appalachian Trail (AT) and approximately one-half mile from both the Brasstown Bald and Mark Trail Wilderness Area boundaries.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Walston, Lynn	This is NOT an appropriate project adjunct to our national forest!! Please stop this construction!	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Weeks, Jack	I am not in favor of the proposed target range in Union County. I am concerned about the proximity of the proposed range to both the nearby Wilderness Areas and to the Appalachian Trail. This particular use does not seem compatible with the existing natural wilderness areas and the passive recreational uses currently in place. I believe the target range will generate activity and noise detrimental to the Wilderness Area and Appalachian Trail experiences.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Weeks, Jack	I understand that a target range already exists in this area, so, I question the need for this one in Union County.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the objectives and goals of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan. Demand for a target range in Union County is gauged to be high based upon grassroots interest in the Union County Gun Club, use at similar sites, and diverse contacts requesting information on the locations of target ranges on the National Forest.
Welty, Patricia	I oppose the shooting range proposal because it is within a zone that is close to the national Appalachian Trail and will conflict with the mission of the trail and environment.	The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
West, David	<p>Im a memer at the Union County gun club, member of Americon Legion Post here in Blairsville Ga. ME AS a member would like to have gunclub here in Union Co. Because of the great need to train our police officers, children adualts, Men and women. Gun saftey, and how to protect them self, in case they are involed in a life threatening, situation.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
Wilkie, Hugh	<p>A bad bad idea.</p> <p>Is this a national forest or a shooting range?</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>
Wilkie, Hugh	<p>Who would have thought to appropriate an area paradise and turn it into another hell!</p> <p>After this just what is next? I guess that no place is sacred, who are these 300 loud citizens of who knows where?</p> <p>How are they so powerful?</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>
Wilkie, Hugh	<p>More noise, crowds, mean people, you can go anywhere for that.</p>	<p>The predictive sound assessment and live firing demonstration have addressed noise levels in the area. The predictive sound assessment will be used to address noise issues in the Environmental Assessment. Measures to mitigate noise will be implemented in the final operations plan.</p>
Wilkie, Hugh	<p>But quiet peace and solitude, do not seem to have any value at all? No place for nature, even in those places that were set aside for it, or so it has become in a sea of development that surrounds our mountains.</p>	<p>The live firing demonstration was an out of scope activity, completed for informational purposes only, and does not represent actual firing conditions of the proposed range.</p> <p>Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Wilkie, Hugh	<p>Some of use love living here just the way it is and why take it all away from us tax payers? I guess that someone wants hunters and other transient types more than honest tax paying civilians that just want to live here! Any idiot can pull a trigger, but who can appreciate trees and wildlife? Well it looks like it is up to some Government entity, I am wondering and worried.</p> <p>Why are these shooters so important that they can't travel to Murphy and shoot for \$3 which few pay anyhow? Where is the mooching going to stop? First 14 ac. There where does it stop?</p> <p>I hope that there are other people like us who moved here to get away from the big city, not make paradise an armed camp where no one is secure, not so friendly and not real bright?</p> <p>Well I guess you will need to widen the quaint road to accommodate the upsurge in traffic hotels to accommodate the hordes of people from other states that do not care, what about us?</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>
Willett, Suzanne	<p>Even with a berm, all gunfire would be pointed toward the Appalachian trail. The AT is a national treasure for many American citizens and it is one of the very few places in this country where you can truly feel free from concerns about society and the outside world, and to enjoy the natural beauty of our country, while we still have it</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Williams, John	<p>I see a lot of folks are against the target range, I wonder how many of them have ever been on a target range? People are saying the noise will disturb the wildlife, the truth is there are many times a range will be shut down because deer, rabbits, turkey, and even bear have wandered onto the range. Other times birds land on the target stands, not to mention the many birds that build nests in the overhang of shed roofs. When animals are on the range, all activity stops until they clear the area. The sound does not disturb the wildlife! As for the sound being heard miles away, due to the hills surrounding the range proposed property and the heavy tree coverage, the sound will be minimal. To the hikers, I am sorry you can't be satisfied with the many thousands of acres in the forest and want to deprive others of enjoying their hobby. Might I remind all in opposition, that not everyone is able to hike, people have different abilities and hobbies. With over 78 miles of the Appalachian Trail in Georgia, surely hikers could deal with the possibility of a little sound for a short time to allow others to enjoy their hobby. However it appears that hikers are too self-centered to allow for that! They want every tree, leaf, rock and even the air everything breaths to be for THEM ONLY! We all pay taxes, we all have the right to enjoy our hobbies. Just because you do not agree with others, does not give you the right to say "NO" to what others like to do.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p>
Wilson, Cathy	<p>If this an open range we are not in agreement with this build.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).</p>
Wilson, Cathy	<p>Our property would loose value if gun shot noise would be heard all day and evening.</p>	<p>The Forest Service has previously conducted a review of scientific literature and could not find research that provides a statistically valid link between shooting ranges and property values that supports the statement of negative affects.</p>

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Wilson, Cathy	If this an underground low noise gun range we are happy to support and bring funds to the community.	Thank you for your comment and for letting us know of your concerns.. The USFS considers public safety and public health as a key benefit of shooting ranges. The Environmental Assessment will address factors such as public safety, noise, cultural resources, and threatened or endangered plant and animal species.
Wilson, Cathy	We purchased this property to relax and retire. We are NOT in support of an "open" gun range.	Thank you for your comment. The project is consistent with the goal and objectives of the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forest Plan (Please see Goal 31 of the 2004 Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Plan).
Wilson, Sam	I am writing to express my full support of the establishment of a Union County Shooting range on Forest Service Public land.	Thank you for your comments.
Wilson, Sam	<p>This facility will provide a safe and controlled environment in which to practice the sport of shooting, keep firearm use and sport in a appropriate and maintained location, and provide a place for those beginning the sport or young folks being introduced to the sport and taught proper use and safety.</p> <p>In addition this facility will create a location for local law enforcement to train and remain qualified as required by their profession.</p> <p>All requirements for the creation of this enterprise and use of public lands are being followed in accordance with the statutes of the Department of Agriculture and the United States Forest Service.</p>	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Wilson, Sam	I have read some dissenting comments about the use of taxpayer funds for this project and that is not true. This project will be member built, owned and operated and fully supported and maintained by the membership which already numbers well over 400 individuals. The organizers are going through all the legal steps required to ensure that our range meets all state and federal guidelines regarding noise, soil and water contamination and any other regulation that might harm the environment or place anyone in peril.	Thank you for your comments.
Wood, Norris	I am a USAF veteran, a member of the Towns County Gun Club, the NRA, and a Georgia concealed carry Permit holder. This target range has been anticipated for some time and will be a great asset to our community. A local range will be used by many gun owners in Union County. The dues paid by members will help sustain the upkeep of the grounds. We know the target range will get lots of use. In the past, we had to go to Hiawassee or some other range a greater distance away.	Thank you for your comments.

Author(s)	Comment	Response
Woods, John W.	<p>I read in our local paper (White County News) about the proposed Gun Range that you are planning to build in Union County.</p> <p>I believe this is a much needed/wanted facility in this area. There are not many places that hunters of target shooters can go to sight in their hunting rifles or practice shooting targets with their rifles and pistols.</p> <p>The only range around here I know of is at Unicoi and it is for air rifles only. I have several rifles that I would like to fire on a safe and well maintained range. I haven't been able to do very much target shooting for several years and would appreciate a safe facility to engage in this sport.</p> <p>I hope there will be a favorable decision on this project. Thanks for the opportunity to comment on this project.</p>	Thank you for your comments.
Young, Elaine	<p>I fully support the union county gun club on acquiring this gun range. Learning to use firearms. Correct would be a good thing for target practice.</p>	Thank you for your comments.
Young, Walt	<p>I want to state my support for the union county gun range. I think it would be great to have a place for young and old to learn how to safely use firearms . This project would benefit for safety and etc</p>	Thank you for your comments.