

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA  
BRYSON CITY DIVISION  
CIVIL ACTION NO. 2:10-CV-15-MR-DCK

SOUTHERN FOUR WHEEL DRIVE )  
ASSOCIATION, UNITED FOUR )  
WHEEL DRIVE ASSOCIATION, THE )  
BLUE RIBBON COALITION, INC., )

Plaintiffs, )

v. )

UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE, )  
NANTAHALA NATIONAL FOREST, )  
MARISUE HILLIARD, Forest )  
Supervisor, )

Defendants, )

TROUT UNLIMITED, PUBLIC )  
EMPLOYEES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL )  
RESPONSIBILITY, WILD SOUTH, )

Intervenor-Defendants. )

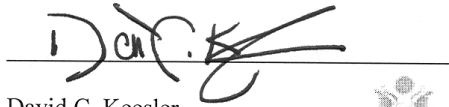
NOTICE

**THIS MATTER IS BEFORE THE COURT** *sua sponte* regarding the parties' joint request, during a telephone conference on June 29, 2010, that the Court consider conducting an early judicial settlement conference in this matter. This issue has been referred to the undersigned Magistrate Judge pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §636(b), and immediate review is appropriate.

The Court commends the parties for seeking early alternative dispute resolution, and the undersigned has carefully considered the matter and consulted with the presiding district judge. The Court concludes based on the status of the case, the short-term availability of judicial resources, and the relative time-urgency of the request, that a judicial settlement conference is not appropriate at this time. Alternatively, the Court respectfully encourages the parties to consider early mediation

with a private mediator. The Court does not rule out the possibility of a judicial settlement conference at a later stage in the litigation, if necessary and warranted.

Signed: July 19, 2010

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D.C. Keesler", is written over a horizontal line.

David C. Keesler  
United States Magistrate Judge

