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Comments: I am writing to you tonight to plead with you to stop the plans to log mature forests in the Green Mountain National Forest. Specifically, I write in regards to the Telephone Gap Integrated Resource Project #60192. I have seen the devastation of clear cutting that was done on Bingo Brook - in the Robinson Project and am heartbroken to see these mature forests being decimated.

Research by the University of Vermont shows that New England forests could store 2 to 4 times more carbon if we just let them grow old. Letting mature and old trees stand is one of the most effective things that Vermonters can do to combat climate change and extinction. Private forests are the source of 96% of the timber supply in Vermont, so protecting public forests would have minimal impact on the wood products economy. We must put our public forests on a different path.

Mature and old forests matter for a lot more reasons than the carbon that they store. These same forests are also powerhouses for biodiversity, clean water, and climate resilience. Many of New England's most imperiled species, including pine marten, Northern Long-eared Bats, and brook trout, thrive in healthy, old forests. Old forests excel at removing the phosphorus and nitrogen that drive algal blooms and dead zones in our rivers, lakes, and ponds. And they are exceptional at reducing the impacts of both floods and droughts, by slowing, sinking, and storing water.

As well this really does NOT go along with President Biden's executive orders signed in 2022 to protect mature growth forests.