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Comments: I am deeply opposed to the Telephone Gap logging project for several reasons.

History has told us that large scale cutting of forests on mountains causes soil loss, erosion and resulting sedimentation of streams and lakes. George Perkins Marsh, a Vermonter, wrote in *Man and Nature*, published in 1867, about the destruction of forests in Vermont and compared it to destruction of forests by ancient civilizations in the Mediterranean region, leading to their demise. Deforesting the hillsides and eroding soils, they had destroyed the basis for their own wellbeing.

The area in question - larger than area of Burlington - contains a major concentration of trees 80 to 160 years old. The Green Mountain Forest contains a greater carbon density than most other national forests. Preserving mature and old-growth forests is absolutely essential for keeping the Earth's temperature from rising more than 1.5 degree Celsius because such forests sequester more carbon than younger trees, protect habitat for endangered species such as pine marten, Northern long-eared bat, and brook trout, protect water quality and reduce impacts of floods and droughts.

On Earth Day 2022, President Biden called for preservation of old growth forests in order to help curb global warming.

Smithsonian Jan/Feb 2022 had an excellent article on old-growth forests in western Massachusetts, making the point that old-growth forests are excellent for carbon sequestration. (See attached)

Northeast forests can store two to four times more carbon if we can just live them live. They are powerful sources for biodiversity, clean water and climate resilience. Forests are also a source of spiritual healing and rejuvenation, if left intact. The aftermath of a clearcut is devastating to me and others who know and love the forest as a living entity.

Logging this portion of the GMNF will endanger water quality of Chittenden Reservoir, headwaters of White River and Otter Creek, introduce invasive species, and destroy habitat needed by threatened and endangered species. Adding any pesticides to the mix for invasive control would be an unnecessary additional danger to E & T species and water quality.

Please do not use our tax dollars to destroy the mature and old-growth forests in the Telephone Gap project area.