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Comments: The Wonalancet Preservation Association was founded in 1973 with the mission of preventing pollution and other commercial activities detrimental to the natural beauty of the Wonalancet Basin, which includes Tamworth, Sandwich, Waterville Valley and Albany.. Our 2010 bylaws further states its purpose [ldquo]to maintain Wonalancet as a physically beautiful, rural, undeveloped location so the public may continue to benefit from and enjoy the unspoiled, bucolic yet wild character of the area, and to exercise special vigilance to ensure human activities and habitation do not diminish the natural assets of the area.[rdquo]

I write in service of that mission today. That Wonalancet remains beautiful and bucolic today is no accident. People living here and away have given time and money to help conserve properties and come to work on the trails so that others may come and enjoy their time here, away from the places they live, where nature ceases to exist in this way.

This is not 2005. We wake up many mornings to news of fires burning acres of land and people losing their homes. The two years previous we experienced unusual droughts in New Hampshire that saw people[rsquo]s wells going dry, some for the first time ever. The torrential rains experienced in 2023 and the flooding that ensued as well as the sustained record breaking temperatures opened our eyes to the Climate Emergency upon us. All of this begs the question as to why a 2005 Forest Management Plan is being offered today in 2023? . That the plan is woefully inadequate is not up for debate. The lack of language in the plan addressing climate or carbon capture is inexcusable. The lengthy timeline of cutting has not been explained. Really, a project of 5 to 10 years? Why? And is it fair to ask those whose primary recreation is hiking or walking their dog, or cross country skiing here to have that kind of patience? Where else would that ever be appropriate? It is for these reasons that the WPA objects to the SVMP #57392 as currently written.

The sole purpose of the WPA is to protect this beautiful area to be enjoyed by many more generations to come. If not us, then who? To stand by and watch it be deforested again, after we have been through many smaller clear cuts is unfair. Now is not the time. Go back and do your research. Hold many meetings so people can have their questions answered. Consider alternatives (of which we have heard nothing.) I will end with a quote from a professor of forest ecology, Jim Lutz at Utah State University. [ldquo]The condition of our forests is a choice, a decision that's now more social than natural. In the future we will have only the natural places we choose to have, only the ones we value enough to protect and restore and nurture.[rdquo]