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Organization: Society for the Protection of NH Forests  
Title: Public Policy Director  
Comments: Brooke M. Brown  
Pemigewasset District Ranger  
White Mountain National Forest  
U.S. Forest Service  
71 White Mountain Dr,  
Campton, NH 03223

Dear Ms. Brown:

Thank you for accepting these comments in support of the White Mountain National Forest's Lost River Integrated Resource Project Resource Project.

As you know, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests is a 121 year-old land trust and forestry organization whose mission is to perpetuate the forests of New Hampshire through their wise use and their complete reservation in places of special scenic beauty. We were formed by a group of citizens concerned with the rapid and poorly planned timber harvesting occurring in the White Mountains in the late 19th Century and early 20th Century.

Since the establishment of the White Mountain National Forest, we have considered the U.S. Forest Service to be a key partner in the protection and management of the forest resources in this state. As such, we have engaged with the agency in the development of past forest plans dating back to the original passage of the National Forest Management Act in 1976, including the current WMNF Land and Resource Management Plan (WMNF Plan).

The Forest Service's responsibility to steward the White Mountain National Forest for multiple purposes and uses is similar to that of the Forest Society as we manage our reservations. Forest products, outdoor recreation, opportunities for public education and the protection of water and soil resources are some of the many benefits all of us receive from the forests in New Hampshire, including those in the White Mountains. The current WMNF Plan details these multiple goals and objectives the Forest Service must balance. The 2005 Forest Plan was the product of several years of public engagement, ultimately resulting in a consensus plan that balanced many interests and perspectives and was implemented without legal challenge.

Far from being conflicting goals, sustainable forest management and the permanent conservation of forests are closely linked. This point is succinctly made by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report on Climate Change which states: "Sustainable forest management can prevent deforestation, maintain and enhance carbon sinks and can contribute towards GHG emissions-reduction goals. Sustainable forest management generates socio-economic benefits, and provides fibre, timber and biomass to meet society's growing needs."

The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests concurs with the IPCC statement. We believe sustainable forest management can help all landowners, both public and private, reach the long-term outcomes the IPCC describes as well as promote improvements to wildlife habitats and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Of course, management activities require a careful and thorough planning process. The Forest Society has long been committed to such a process. That is why we recognize and support other forest landowners, including our partners at the U.S. Forest Service, who are also committed to the long-term stewardship of their forest stands.

We look forward to reviewing the analysis of potential effects of the proposed action when the Forest Service releases the project's draft environmental assessment. We anticipate submitting additional comments at that time.

Sincerely,

Matt Leahy  
Public Policy Director  
Society for the Protection of NH Forests