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Comments:

I am writing to request that the USDA Forest Service continue full environmental impact review, and give strong weight to recommendations for environmental protection in introducing any streamlining when reviewing proposals for mineral exploration on federal lands.

As we see in recent year accelerating impacts of climate change on all life, wild ecosystems become more vulnerable. I am very concerned that ecosystems that are habitats for threatened or endangered species, areas that provide crucial resting places for migratory bird species, and tundra and peat soils that capture carbon not be disturbed. Each of these is a precious and irreplaceable natural resource. Justifications for exploration tend to be couched in economic benefit that will be realized locally, and for a limited time period. However, the damage that is done to the environment and to biodiversity will be permanent. The earth is an ongoing concern, and we owe it to future generations to be good stewards of life on earth.