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Comments: Mr. Brett Hillman

USDA Forest Service

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Re:ESHC Project

I am writing in support for the Green Mountain National Forest Early Successional Habitat Creation Project.

As a sportsman and general outdoor enthusiast, I find great interest in the proposed ESHC.

Young forest habitat is in decline throughout the Northeast. The current forest age class distribution in Southern Vermont and Western Massachusetts does not favor nor is ecologically sustainable for those species that depend on young aspen-birch habitat. Action is necessary to effectively transition the age structure back to a balanced healthy forest.

A forest plan that ensures diversity of composition, structure and function is vital for populations of native plants and animals. The multi-year ESHC project is a positive step towards improving early successional habitats in the Manchester Ranger District. Implementing managed regeneration cutting within these priority stands will help establish some of the new forests we need while supporting local forest-based economies.

This important conservation work will have far reaching effect on the current and future populations of migrant songbirds, ruffed grouse, woodcock and all other wildlife species that live in our early successional forests. We hope that this project will serve as a model for other forest management plans in the region.

Thank you for your consideration and stewardship of our wildlands.

Respectfully,

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