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First name: JOHN
Last name: MCDONALD
Organization:
Title:
Comments: I am writing to support the proposed project to create early successional forest habitat on the Green Mt National Forest and to support a Finding of No Significant Impact for the proposed actions. I am professional wildlife biologist with graduate degrees in wildlife science and a BS in forest management, most of my professional experience has been with forest wildlife species in the Northeastern US. I reside in northwestern MA and am very familiar with the landscape of the Manchester Ranger District.

The amount of young forest habitat in eastern forests has declined in recent decades as forest management activities have been restricted to smaller opening sizes and have occurred over reduced areas. Wildlife species that depend on young forest habitats for some of their life history requirements have also declined in the Northeast, though locally have been demonstrated to respond rapidly to the creation of young forest.

The proposed actions will have a positive effect on species that use these forest age classes as well as on wildlife-dependent recreation including, bird watching, wildlife photography, and upland bird hunting. Creating young forest (0-9 year old age classes) in small openings will provide seasonal habitat requirements not only for species that breed or nest in young forests, but also provide abundant insects that many bird species use during the post fledging period, and provide soft mast for bird and mammal species as more sunlight is able to reach the forest floor. During my own doctoral research in western Massachusetts, I surveyed for soft mast resources and found they were extremely spotty and associated with small openings and roadsides in the forest.

Large land managers, like the USFS, can create habitats at a scale that other landowners and managers can't, and have the ability to plan over time scales that other landowners often can't, as well. Thus, young forests can be created in a pattern that mimics natural processes on USFS lands and provide a wide range of benefits to wildlife, forests, and people.

I support the proposed action and a FONSI for the action.