

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 4/20/2022 4:00:00 AM

First name: Cheryl

Last name: Lipton

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Brooke Brown,

I'm writing to give my opinion on the Tarleton Integrated Resource Project. It is a mistake to engage in logging due to the two existential crises of Climate Change and Extinctions/Biodiversity loss. There is a very small amount of mature forest remaining, and we need to encourage and support it rather than continue reducing it by logging. National Forests should be left in existence for everyone to enjoy, including people visiting, hiking, camping, birding, taking pictures and the flora and fauna that need it as habitat, not to be used as a crop for a select few loggers to cut down. Lake Tarleton Forest was threatened in the past and saved 22 years ago, purposely to be kept standing. It should not be cut down now, only a couple of decades later. This area should be protected and left to grow old, to stay old, and to exist as the master carbon sink and sequestration area that it is and can continue to be, to be home to rare and endangered ecosystems, common and uncommon species, interior forest species such as the Northern Long-Eared Bat and American Marten, and to provide a place that is a refuge in species trying to hold on or migrate in this changing climate. It is bad science and unjust justification to manage for first succession species, create huge patch-cuts calling it restoration, habitat creation, etc. There is more than enough edge species habitats in the tremendous amount of suburbia and sprawl - rural and suburban. What is needed is old-growth forests, mature forests to support the interior species that are in decline because of habitat loss - because the USFS is "managing" for edge species. Interior species don't need patch cuts - they need very small single downed tree openings - with the tree not removed. They need old forest. It's time to stop justifying past behavior and stop continuing destructive behavior of all the various forestry "treatments" that continues to cause climate change and extinctions. Logging in our National Forests should cease, and especially in this place that was purposely saved from the chopping block 22 years ago. It would be a good idea to log the non-native trees that were planted, but not the native forest on its way to becoming old growth, habitat for many species that are in danger due to our lack of old growth forest. The Biden Administration has put forth an effort to protect 30% of land and water by 2030, and logging in Tarleton is in contradiction to that, in contradiction to mitigating climate change, and in contradiction to protecting species in danger of extinction. Logging here is in contradiction to the Biological Evaluation by the Forest Service, even. The Northern Long-Eared Bat, right now Federally Threatened, and being considered to be elevated to Endangered, is present there but will be negatively impacted by having it's habitat greatly reduced at best, but most likely destroyed. Summer habitat, maternity roost trees, are imperative for the recovery of this species, and to remove that habitat is another thing that is unjustifiable and will absolutely negatively impact this species that should have only help rather than hindrance. This will be one more nail in the coffin of this (soon to be listed) endangered species. It will also negatively impact other vulnerable species as noted in the USFS statement.

In the Updated Draft Environmental Assessment and Preliminary FONSI, the Consequences of No Action section is written to justify logging, and is incorrect in many statements. Other statements are correct but stated in a negative light, giving a false message that the outcome is negative. Moving to a situation of old growth mature forest is a positive direction, good for many reasons. Small single tree gaps are a desirable feature. Young forest habitat and upland openings created only by windthrow and beaver activity are good results. Less young forest habitat favoring wildlife species that prefer older forests is a positive change, because the old forest species are in decline and need to be allowed habitat. There should not be permanent wildlife openings, since that habitat already exists in plenty, outside of the White Mountain National Forest, and in many places within it, where there are human activities. This letter is to state that there should not be logging. Restoration activities should occur. There should be management to restore the forest along the lake shoreline, though it should be more than the minimal 100 feet or so, stated in the plan.

As for Climate Change impacts, removing the trees that are storing carbon, with that amount of carbon not

removed again from the atmosphere until the time it takes to restore the forest, the 100 years or more, is insufficient considering the situation we are in right now. We don't have those years to spare. That might be a valid timeline when we are at equilibrium with carbon and climate change, but we are not at equilibrium now, and losing that stored carbon, and the carbon that the large trees continue to sequester every single year that they continue to live, is untenable. Large trees sequester more carbon per year than seedlings, saplings, and small trees.

There are new reports, new research and new information showing that continued logging as you are planning is the wrong approach to address the problems that we are now facing. This plan is running on old data, old research, that is no longer valid. It is incorrect and the USFS needs to update before continuing to go forward with the treatments specified in the plan. This plan is justified with old information that is now known to be incorrect.

The Lake Tarleton Integrated Resource Project is a mistake and should not go forward.