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First name: Heather

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Ms. Brown:

I write to you as a birder, hiker, environmentalist, and concerned citizen expressing my opposition to the Lake Tarleton Integrated Resource Project. In the last few years it has become ever more evident that forests provide ecosystem services that are critical to the health of the planet and those who live on it. Clear cutting has no place in current thinking on the subject. Moreover, this project violates the massive effort undertaken to save 5300+ acres of this land and protect it from development 22 years ago. It should be designated a Scenic Area in order to guarantee that this battle need not be fought repeatedly. The project strikes me as bureaucracy run amok, forging ahead without regard to the intent of the original protection of the area, current thinking on the value of forests and the needs and wishes of citizens.

This is not only one of the most scenic areas of New Hampshire. Lake Tarleton also boasts clean water, a rare and valuable condition. The logging project places this in jeopardy along with the entire ecosystem essential to wildlife of many species. Runoff from cut areas and use of herbicides will undermine water quality. Mature forests have been highlighted as the backbone of their ecosystems, providing services that include improving water quality, carbon storage and soil conservation and enrichment among others. They benefit many species, including the microscopic, insects (pollinators), birds, reptiles, amphibians, and mammals (including bats) and plants. (See *The Arboraught*, by Meg Lowman and National Geographic, *The World's Forests*. There are many other sources.)

The unspoiled nature of this area is of great value to humans as well. The last several years have shown how restorative nature can be for people. Hiking, birding and boating all contribute to the mental health of people under stress. Having recently come across a clear cut while hiking, I can attest to its jarring, dispiriting effect.

New Hampshire is fortunate in having a fair amount of forest. It should be nurtured as an ally in the attempt to slow global climate change, as medicine for the soul, as an incubator of biodiversity, rather than being damaged with far reaching negative effects.

I hope you will hear from others with unique viewpoints and will use your influence to halt this ill-conceived project and to support Scenic Area designation for this entire area. Thank you for considering my views.