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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Lake Tarleton has been a part of my family's history for almost 80 years. For three generations, this lake and surrounding forest has been a special place for us.

My family followed the fate of this beloved area from 1969 when the Tarleton Club was sold to Boise Cascade and then rescued from logging and an enormous development by the State of New Hampshire Shoreline Protection Act, through two more developers, until finally, in 2000, the land became public. Both the State of New Hampshire and the New Hampshire US Congressional Delegation promised that the land would be protected. US Senator Judd Gregg said, "This pristine New Hampshire wilderness has been saved." The 2.1 managed forest designation was never mentioned. In 2005, when the current Forest Plan was created, this area should have been protected, but we were once again not aware there was a danger of clear cutting. I don't think that most people are aware that clear cutting is done every 20 years, and that you plan to keep making holes in the forest above the lake. I beg of you to finally correct this injustice and restore the public's trust that you are the protectors of this treasured place. Please reclassify Lake Tarleton/Webster Slide as a Scenic Area.

I am probably the person with the most contact with visitors to Lake Tarleton. I am at the boat launch at least once every weekend from Memorial Day to Labor Day (I am the Lake Host Program Supervisor), I walk with my dog to the State Beach parking lot twice a day and I go down to the beach most mornings, I am out in my sailboat or a kayak every day that it isn't raining from June to October. I talk to the people heading up the "elevator shaft" to the summit of Mount Piermont and to the artists who come here all summer and the photographers along Lake Katherine in the Fall. In the winter, when the trees are bare, cars and trucks stop along route 25C to look at the frozen lake surrounded by forest. This winter view (which wasn't included in your analysis) is directly at Webster Slide and the area below it. In short, people come here from all over the US and even Europe because it is scenic, pristine, and the water is clean. I don't think we can take any chances with any of those things. I want this place to be known to more people, I want the ecological mistakes of the past to be corrected, but this plan to clear-cut in the view scape around the largest lake in the White Mountain National Forest is wrong.

In 2008, the Tompkins, the Muntzes and the Aschers convinced the Lake Tarleton State Park ranger that we should stop mowing the hill down to the lake in the park. The flock of Canadian geese at the park had reached close to 50 and the e-coli levels in the water at the beach were increasing. The area is about 2 acres and it has been left natural for 14 years. Very few trees have grown there and it's a good example of what your "openings" will look like in 14 years. This area is extremely harsh in the winter, with high winds and extreme cold temperatures. A sapling doesn't have a good chance of survival once it is exposed. Moreover, we have lost the two largest hardwood trees on our property in storms and the row of trees that Fred Glidden planted along Route 25C in 2000 are all dead, all because the Tarleton Club cleared this land. On our own property, we have tried to restore part of the hill in keeping with NH State guidelines. In the Spring, brooks, ponds, springs and bogs appear, even in the flat areas, and they all drain down to the lake. We don't use salt, fertilizer, chemicals or cut trees down, all in an effort to prevent dangerous runoff. I don't feel reassured that your plan has the same intent. I feel that the water flow down to the lake in the areas you are proposing to selectively log needs further study, especially in the Spring.

I must speak to your claim that opening the forest will benefit the animals here. We see wild turkey, bears and moose here often. They have open space to roam at Kingswood, on the old golf course, and in the lots that are open where houses and buildings were removed. They don't know whether they are in the WMNF or not, so saying that they need space within it makes no sense to me.

Finally, I am extremely concerned about invasive species, specifically Japanese Knotweed. I see no mention of it in your proposal, yet you have been spraying it near Lake Katherine. A logging road, with trucks and heavy equipment going in and out is a formula for bringing this invasive species into the Forest. It is prevalent along Route 25 and in the town of Warren and spreads easily along roadways.

I sincerely hope that you will seriously consider our comments and restore our faith that the WMNF was the best protector of the Lake Tarleton/Webster Slide Area that we could have chosen in 2000.