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Title:

Comments: The hundreds of boys who attend Kingswood Camp for Boys every summer, benefit immensely from the surrounding natural beauty, the views of Lake Tarleton, and the enjoyment of the lake itself for water sports.

The proposed logging has the camp's iconic view directly in the crosshairs.

Most of the logging will occur on the eastern side of the lake, starting just 100 feet from the shoreline. And this could impact water clarity and quality.

This undisturbed area would all of a sudden experience patchy forest views, forest practices to enhance logging rather than natural beauty, noise pollution, and water pollution.

The plan also calls for massive clear cuts directly across the lake from Kingswood (between the shore and Webster Slide Mountain (which we call Webster Cliff)). Three contiguous tracts, amounting to 30 acres (think 23 football fields), are slated to be clear cut. What's more, another 114 acres will receive "commercial thinning," which is where they remove poor quality trees now so they can have a more lucrative timber harvest in the future.

It is our opinion that this project is ill-conceived and will irrevocably mar the Tarleton region, reducing its awe and majesty as it becomes a "mixed use" forest. To us, the problem begins with the Forest Service's land management plan. In theory, all land found within the White Mountain National Forest is studied, and each piece of land is given its own designation based on its value and characteristics. The bulk of the land surrounding Lake Tarleton has been designated as MA 2.1 (General Forest Management), the least restrictive management area used by the WMNF. The priorities of land within MA 2.1 are "to provide both healthy ecosystems and a sustainable yield of high quality forest products." Essentially, MA 2.1 lands are the money-makers for the forest service.

However we believe that this land has been incorrectly zoned and should be re-classified as a MA 8.5 (Scenic Area), which would prohibit timber extraction, cell towers, wind turbines, and other development that would diminish the area's scenic, cultural, or natural values. Currently there are nine scenic areas in New Hampshire, but none are found west of I-93. It sure seems like Lake Tarleton, the largest lake in the WMNF, with its commanding view of Mount Moosilauke, the tallest mountain in the western WMNF, should qualify as a Scenic Area.

We also believe that this plan undermines the wishes, promises, and efforts of made by countless private and public figures who came together to preserve this land. Twenty-two years ago, when the Tarleton area was for sale and at risk of large-sale construction, regional conservation groups, private citizens, and New Hampshire politicians came together and raised \$7.5 million to purchase and protect this unique landscape. As longtime Republican U.S. Senator Judd Gregg said at the protection celebration in 2000, "Many of us here today have worked hard for a number of years to reach the point we are at today where we can proudly say that this pristine New Hampshire wilderness has been saved."

The 600 individuals who donated to this effort did not save this land to see it auctioned off to the highest bidding logger. They saved this land because the Lake Tarleton region is a uniquely beautiful and serene habitat that has miraculously escaped significant shoreline development or other major visible signs of mankind's interference with the natural world. The White Mountain National Forest should honor this vision and put in place protections to safeguard this land for perpetuity.