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Comments: Greetings District Ranger Brown, Thank you for the opportunity to comment. In the past several years, I have become increasingly alarmed at both state and federal terminology used in the world of natural resources. Specifically, I find that the phrases "Integrated Resource[hellip].", "Best Available Science", and "Accepted / Best Management Practices" have essentially lost their true meaning and relevance. Absolutely and emphatically so. I illustrate further: 1. Integrated Resource Projects or Integrated Management approaches are integrated in name only, for the purpose of fulfilling a legal obligation and appeasing the public. Funding of projects reveals where the true focus lies; it is my experience that government projects are universally front-end funded; there is often no funding left to practice true Adaptive Management. Good management relies on monitoring and field data collection, but this work is secondary to the real goal of resource extraction. The same corruption has occurred with Integrated Pest Management - funding trails clearly show that chemical control is the one preferred method above all others. Manual and mechanical methods are often ignored and omitted entirely from treatment programs, at least from a funding and academic perspective. I can offer a 2022 podcast as evidence; it includes speakers from state and federal agencies on a university platform offering absolute distortions of truth. 2. Best Available Science is what agencies rely on for decision-making, but that world has over past decades failed to include Traditional Ecological Knowledge and other sources of solid information. I see this all the time when academic platforms promote one product or approach to the full exclusion of all others. "Best" is a judgment call, and the judgment has been traditionally passed by an exclusive group of non-representative bureaucrats. This is a fail. Agencies also choose for themselves what information is "available" or qualifies for consideration. Sadly, there is abundant information and science that gets intentionally suppressed or ignored by those empowered with decision-making capacity. 3. Accepted Practices is also failed terminology. Who makes the decision on what is or is not "accepted"? Why are some practices not accepted? And why are the accepted practices then force-fit onto landscapes and projects with specific conditions and legacy impacts? The public participation process to define and promote accepted practices is arbitrary, and again tends to exclude those not in the mainstream or not hewing to modern norms and the latest / greatest technologies. Arbitrary and capricious is what I see; the notion of Get Big or Get Out still influences our thinking in resource management arenas.

I wrote the above to share my frustration and the serious breach of trust that federal management agencies are creating. While that may be a general statement, I see real issues on both the Green Mountain and White Mountain National Forests with regard to Forest Plans and relevance of the science they draw upon. Specifically, both national forests introduced new Forest Plans in 2005 (White Mountain National Forest) and 2006 (Green Mountain National Forest). Both of those plans have exceeded their lifespans of ten to fifteen years. Further, both forest plans require updating, in-depth and forward-looking, when conditions have shifted dramatically or when major disturbance events have occurred. We have had three such major disturbances since 2005 / 2006, and yet your updates to the forest plans are minimal and virtually useless. The forests have experienced Tropical Storm Irene, multiple drought years since 2016 (four years would include 2016, 2019, 2020, and 2021), and the altered growing seasons brought about with global warming. Forest Service staff apparently sees nothing of concern warranting a plan update; I find that the supplemental reports are completely inadequate. This is deeply troubling; it indicates that both the science as well as the mindsets reviewing the science are outdated and archaic.

This lagging, retro-mindset can be the only explanation for where projects such as Lake Tarleton come from. The Green Mountain NF is also pursuing mis-guided projects with excessive harvest goals and unrealistic expectations. The projects are fatally flawed and make no sense in the current operating environment. If professional managers in federal agencies cannot acknowledge this reality, we have a true crisis on hand. We cannot accept forest management in the 2030s that calls upon data and studies and science from the 1980s and earlier. Even some of that science was alarming in my mind, but much has changed since then. Not that we all don't mean well, but we have to evolve, all of us, at a pace we have not dealt with before. Continuing with the topic of forest management plans, I and other members of the public, understand that they are timebound documents. They apply to set periods of time and they are intended to expire. To think that a 15-year plan can

simply be extended for another ten or fifteen years is betraying the public trust and torpedoing the relevance of the entire plan. You should not expect public embrace of Forest Service processes or even public participation on any level if everyone sees that fifteen years is really just agency-speak for a plan without end. If plans are intended to endure for thirty years, they should be named with that in mind. To do otherwise, as a practice and as a pattern, is an injustice. That the White Mountain National Forest is employing this timeframe trickery is problematic, but the larger problem is that many national forests are doing the same as a matter of routine. It is time for that pattern to break; global warming emphatically adds to that urgency. My final point addresses the issue of invasive species. The Lake Tarleton Project area lies between two linear transmission vectors, the powerline corridor and the state roadway. Both of these vectors lie within a larger transmission feature: the Connecticut River valley. To open a forested landscape located in an area with major recreational activities and situated between two invasive species transmission corridors is a formula for disaster. Harvesting should not occur at all here in order that the forest serve as a buffer protecting more interior forested lands. That is simple common sense; I manage invasive species professionally and have come to know these realities.

There are valid arguments for creating more mature and older-aged forest, but this is not my argument here. I am simply stating that timber harvests in the general Lake Tarleton watershed cannot be justified in the face of the growing invasive species threat; such management simply does not bear hard scrutiny. Again, I have worked up and down the Connecticut River and have also worked sites along the Lower Hudson; my assessment is based on recent observation and experience. Do your people know the treatment costs and long-term impacts of new invasive species? I do, because I'm the person many towns and businesses hire when things get out of hand. Invasive species are a major economic negative, but towns are often left footing the bill years after the poor management choices have occurred. Thank you again for the opportunity; I hope my comments are helpful. Please send me paper documents when you have completed your environmental assessment of this proposed project. I would also like to request a copy of the official Response to Comments document.