

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/11/2022 4:00:00 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: As a long-time member of the Appalachian Mountain Club and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, as well as the Green Mountain Club, I wish to express my concerns about the proposed Lake Tarleton Integrated Resource Project.

My interests are two-fold:

1. As an outdoors person familiar with the Lake Tarleton surroundings I fear that your management plans will severely impact the landscape and integrity of this prime natural and recreation area.
2. There is a fundamental contradiction between your management plan (including logging) and the year 2000 purchase of the land with the intention to prevent commercial logging of the area in perpetuity.

Point 1.:

* The planned forest cutting areas abut the lake shore as well as the AT for almost a mile in each case. The plan proposes a 100' visual (tree) buffer along the lake shore; it allows a 500' buffer along the AT. The 100' buffer is totally inadequate as can be witnessed in recent clear cuttings in NH (see below Sugar Loaf Mtn) and along the Allagash River in Maine. Why do you provide a more efficient buffer in case of the AT? Why do you ignore the federally approved buffer option along the lake shore?

* In addition to the 115 acres designated for clear cutting you are proposing 100 1 acre group cut areas.

Assuming these areas are dispersed over the whole 880 management plot, access roads to those areas will destroy a considerable additional amount of forest land on top of the havoc raised in the cutting lots.

* Clear cutting and timber removal even in winter month will have a severe effect on the forest ground. The area is a watershed above the lake: soil erosion will carry mud into the lake.

* The visual impact of the above activities will be tremendous and ruin the recreational experience for the many people visiting the area.

Point 2.:

* What's the purpose of setting aside a beautiful and unique natural area to prevent commercial development and extraction if you subject it to a management plan? The plan is clearly in conflict with the original intent of the year 2000 purchase. Other than providing access for limited recreational activities we should leave it to nature to take its own paths. I'm supportive of the proposal to declare the Lake Tarleton lands a Scenic Area.

I urge you to reconsider the basis for your management proposal and abandon it altogether. Instead, use your efforts to help designate the Lake Tarleton Lands as Scenic!