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First name: Kathleen

Last name: O&#39;Connell

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Saco District Team & USFS,

I am 53 years old and have grown up in North Sandwich my whole life and currently live on Bennett Street in the shadow of Young Mountain and look directly at Whiteface Mountain. Flat Mountain is on one shoulder, Mt. Israel at the other, so I am literally in the middle of this management "project." I, like many of my neighbors and friends here on Bennett St. and in Wonalancet have some real questions and concerns about what is currently being proposed. I share the following thoughts of one of my neighbors, and like her ask for answers to the following:

"Given the state of the world, the idea of taking DOWN trees, seems counter intuitive to the health of our planet and this state. My family has been trying desperately to protect these woodlots our whole lives," as our backs are literally to the forest where these lands are being threatened by widespread cutting. Many of us are concerned that the end goal is for profit rather than "management" of our forest environment? Multiple neighbors have been approached by independent logging firms over the past two years asking for our timber; some succumbed to the price tag, and others, like me said no. The horrendous conditions left behind by these companies is an atrocity ruining large animal and bird habitats for decades to come. Like my neighbors, I want to know:

1. What will the visual impact be on the Wonalancet Valley, Whiteface Intervale, and Bennett Street (Bennett Street Loop)? From what I heard the impact could be quite substantial and very noticeable. How do you plan to address this? Will the residents have a say before cutting begins? (more on this in point #4)
2. What will the herbicides do to the vegetation and wildlife in the surrounding areas? What EXACT herbicide is being proposed, and how much, and why? We swim, drink the water, and grow our food here. WE DO NOT TAKE THIS LIGHTLY.
3. Who will let us know what is being put in the watershed, and what the effect will be on the vegetation and animals? Again, do we have a say here? How will you communicate?
4. How will the USFA be communicating with the people who live in the area? How will we know who to contact? What is the timeline?
5. What trees are you taking down and why? Are they valuable or a fire hazard? Is this for profit, or is it for the environment?
6. With regard to carbon assessment and value, how will we be informed of this? Will these findings be used to modify plans?
7. Will there be more access to specific and detailed information about what is planned? Before it is happening?

Thank you for hearing my very serious concerns here. This could have a huge impact, and be a real game-changer for this whole area. As one of my neighbors stated in a similar email to you: "I speak for the trees, seeing as they cannot. If we continue to take down trees over and over, pretty soon, we will lose the magic of this amazing place." Thank you for hearing our concerns.