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Comments: I grew up surrounded by old forests, so I learned from a young age their cooling properties, their sheltering of myriad species of wildlife, their importance to erosion control and simply their sheer beauty. What I knew nothing of at the time was their ability to sequester and store CO<sub>2</sub>, a function that has taken on incredible importance in the face of our accelerating climate disaster. Recent studies suggest that Vermont forests have the capacity to sequester large amounts of carbon. This constitutes high value-added when faced with a climate crisis, provided we don't cut them, but allow them to mature. My understanding is that 92% of the Telephone Gap sector proposed for cutting includes areas of old and mature forests. As recently as last year, President Biden's executive order directed the USFS to protect mature forests for the benefit of the climate and biodiversity. We need every mature tree we can preserve for all of the wonderful contributions old forests make, but especially now when our very existence is threatened by climate change. For those reasons, I urge you to halt the proposed logging in Telephone Gap.