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Comments: In general, I am in support of the proposed actions at Telephone Gap, with one exception. The proposed "Improvement Cutting" in stands 4 and 20 in the northwest corner of the project area are located adjacent to and upslope from The Cape Research Natural Area (RNA), which is arguably Vermont's finest and largest example of old growth forest. Fortunately, the USFS had the foresight to permanently protect The Cape as an RNA decades ago due to its unique "big tree community". I believe the proposed cutting and log landing just upslope from The Cape would greatly improve the chances of introducing invasive species to this unique old growth community, which, in my opinion, deserves a larger buffer than it currently receives. I would urge the USFS to consider eliminating the proposed actions in this area, or greatly reducing the size of the two treatments. I would also encourage you to consider relocating the log landing so it is further from the eastern boundary of the RNA.

Other than that, I support the proposed actions, particularly the Vermont Huts Association's application for a special use permit to construct, operate, and maintain a four-season hut within the footprint of the former lodge that was destroyed by fire near South Pond, and the proposal to create 34.9 miles of trail through new construction, relocation, and designation for mountain biking, hiking, and cross-country skiing. This will greatly enhance the ability of the public to enjoy this incredible public resource that is the Green Mountain National Forest.