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Comments: The proposal to log 11,800 acres in the Telephone Gap area of the Green Mountain National Forest in the vicinity of Chittenden needs to be withdrawn. That is an area larger than the city of Burlington. A high percentage of the stands proposed for cutting are 80 to 160 years old or more - the workhorses of carbon sequestration. This logging is unnecessary and unjustifiable economically or environmentally. Vermont's private forests can supply all of the timber we need while logging younger trees. Worse yet, our tax dollars should not subsidize logging that hastens climate change. And it violates the intent of President Biden's 2022 executive order to preserve mature forests. This logging on public lands cannot be allowed to happen.

The Forest Service proposal is based on an out-of-date Forest Plan, using old research and policies. There is a large and growing body of more recent research showing that old trees sequester by far the most carbon, with the largest 1% of trees in the U.S. sequestering a huge 30% of the carbon. A recent study (Erb et al.) shows that forests have the capacity to take up and store an amazing half or more of the world's climate-changing carbon emissions.