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Comments: I am a resident of Weybridge and a founding member of Pollinator Pathway of Addison County. My concern about proposed timber sales in the Telephone Gap in the Green Mountain National Forest is my interest in the biodiversity of the forest.

I have learned that ninety-two percent, or 10,855-acres, of the proposed Telephone Gap area are classified as mature or old (up to 160 years of age). These are exactly the forests that President Biden's Executive Order of 2022 to conserve mature and old-growth forests is intended to protect.

I am very concerned about the following: large trees sequester a great deal of carbon, they anchor the soil and prevent erosion, they protect water quality, they provide a home for multiple insect species which are food for songbirds, and they protect the other wildlife that depends on trees for food and shelter. Furthermore, taking out large trees allows more room for invasive plants, which then make the forest less beneficial for wildlife.

I agree with many people and groups that the Telephone Gap review needs to consider more recent scientific studies than the 2008 studies that are being used for this project.

Ultimately, we need to leave our National Forest land forever wild so that it can anchor the biodiversity that the Earth needs to survive. We cannot continue with our human-centered approach to the natural world. Prioritizing our National Forest for hunters and loggers is no longer the best and highest use for our National Forest. We must do better.