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First name: Ulrike

Last name: von Moltke

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Mr. Strand,

When we moved 23 years ago to where we now live, the land was all wooded. We cut enough trees for 2 small house sites. A little later we allowed a logger to "clear out" what he felt was needed to "improve the forest's health", leaving us a load of trunks for our wood stoves. We regret it today. At the time we didn't know better but have come to see things differently over the years.

In regard to the US Forest Service's intention to open more than 11,000 acres in the GMNF to logging -with 13% of its trees older than 120 years-, I strongly question taking action based on a 2006 Forest Plan. Common awareness of the full dimensions of the climate crisis is still only beginning to take hold. With the increasingly frequent reports of natural disasters attributed to global warming, priorities are changing.

86% of carbon is lost from New England's public forests per year by logging, whereas up to four times more carbon can be stored by proforestation. Along with the new science we understand that mature and old forests are our best allies in mitigating climate change, including protection of biodiversity as well as flood and erosion control.

The interests of the timber industry may no longer be in alignment with perceptions of the public good. Now in particular is not the time to make irrevocable decisions involving cutting of mature trees in public forests. Instead, I urge you to consider designating the Telephone Gap project area as a 'climate forest reserve'. This would be a responsible and forward looking alternative approach for public land management as well as the right response to President Biden's Executive Order of last year for the Forest Service to protect these old forests for the benefit of the climate and future life on earth.

sincerely

Ulrike von Moltke