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Organization:

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Comments: I have lived in Vermont all my life and have spent many nights camping in the Green Mountain National Forest and biking the roads along and over these mountains. I would like to make a comment on the proposed logging project in the telephone gap area of central Vermont. I feel strongly that this logging project is a mistake and should not go forward.

Old trees are so important, practically and spiritually. They are effective in storing carbon and represent a truly spiritual place and a legacy that once destroyed is gone forever.

Forests clean and feed our waters. This huge area of Vermont old forests is critical to many of our water resources. Again, once lost they are lost forever and the water quality is far more important than the timber sales to be generated. Once roads are created, more logging will follow. This is the opposite direction than we should be going.

Practically speaking, old forests are exceptional for sequestering and storing vast amounts of carbon, protecting water quality, and mitigating droughts and floods. Today, just 0.3% of New England forests are older than 150 years. The areas proposed for logging in the Telephone Gap timber sale have major concentrations of mature trees between 80-160 years old.

Research by the University of Vermont shows that New England forests could store 2 to 4 times more carbon if we just let them grow old. Letting mature and old trees stand is one of the most effective things that Vermonters can do to combat climate change and extinction. More importantly, it is our obligation to wild nature, the planet and our grandchildren.

I urge you to reconsider any logging within this wilderness area and protect these acres for generations to come. I would like to take my grandchildren camping where I went in these quiet and peaceful places, surrounded by old trees.

Please stop this proposed logging project!

Jaan Laaspere