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Comments: My niece recently moved close to the proposed Telephone Gap Integration Resource Project. I remember very clearly how we all became aware of Vermont's vulnerability to increased flooding due to climate change. The devastation caused by Hurricane Irene is a reminder of the value of keeping old forests intact. Many Vermonters were traumatized by the flooding and devastation.

Old forests are one of our best tools for combatting climate change with their ability to sequester and store 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. Nine-two percent of the targeted area for the Telephone Gap Project is such a forest.

Despite playing an outsize role in carbon sequestration, these old forests provide habitat for many crucial and/or threatened native species and the biodiversity we all need to survive. Forests clean our air and our water. Keeping the Telephone Gap are intact is probably the single most important thing that the state of Vermont can do to mitigate the effects of climate change.

It would be foolhardy to allow logging in this precious resource. Let's not continue to destroy our children's future for the benefit of a few.