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First name: Kara

Last name: Fitzbeauchamp

Organization:

Title:

Comments: As a farmer who uses plenty of wood products (lumber for projects, pellets for our greenhouse heat, firewood for our home's heat), I value responsible and thoughtful logging operations in our state so that we can source our wood product needs close to home to minimize our environmental impact. I also understand that we are lucky in the northeast to have forest systems that regenerate comparatively quickly to other climates around the country. But this specific project seems like a terrible idea for many reasons, and I hope the proposal, as it is will be paused and completely redesigned before any logging begins.

Climate collapse is happening globally, and older, mature trees, are an essential tool to maintain in carbon capture. We cannot risk losing large stands of older trees like those in the proposed Telephone Gap cut, with all the capacity for capturing carbon they currently provide.

Creating a massive clear cut is dangerous and disruptive to wildlife habitat, and this particular proposal threatens the northern long-eared bat, which is now listed as endangered, and mostly makes homes in older forests.

Also, these types of cuts are just ugly and ruin recreational areas that locals love. We live near the Coolidge State forest, and frequently ski and hike in the area off Old Plymouth Road. There was a sizable (but nothing like the Telephone Gap proposal) clear cut area off those trails recently (I believe in the zone managed by VT Fish and Wildlife), and it has ruined a lot of trails that locals love and enjoy. It took countless volunteer time for the community to move all brush and mess left behind from the cut off the existing trails so that we can continue to use them. The bare minimum that can be done when a cut happens in well used trail areas is to have the logging operation clean the all the slash off trails.

This specific cut also threatens the headwaters of water supplies in the area, including the Chittenden Reservoir.

I am at a loss to understand what the upsides to this proposed cut are.

In 2023, with so much of our climate and ecosystems ravaged by the affects of irresponsible human consumption, it is essential that we design all our future logging operations to reflect the environmental needs of the time. Smaller patch cuts can be acceptable in the right spots. Selective logging of certain trees in an area also seem reasonable. I imagine it's economically easier for an agency to just plan a massive clear cut, but those days are behind us.

Please pause this proposal, and redesign it with the environment and the people that use that space at the center of the project. That is not the case at the moment, and so therefor, this is a bad idea. Thank you.