

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/12/2023 7:57:29 PM

First name: Barbara

Last name: Murphy-Warrington

Organization:

Title:

Comments: The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) is proposing to log 11,800 acres of mostly mature and old trees in Vermont's Green Mountain National Forest (GMNF) east of Brandon. This massive "timber sale" is part of a management plan called the Telephone Gap Integrated Resource Project (TGIRP).

This timber sale has been called one of the 10 worst projects in the U.S. by Climate Forests, a national coalition of 120 environmental groups. This massive and highly destructive logging job would devastate an area larger than the entire City of Burlington. It would endanger the water quality of Chittenden Reservoir, introduce invasive species, and destroy habitat needed by threatened and endangered species.

My sons and I are owners of several forest acres of mature trees in Lincoln, Vermont. We understand the importance of preserving forest cover, especially that generated by mature forest, in the US' commitment to address climate change both in the US and around the world. Our forest has witnessed the detrimental impact of extreme weather and microburst storms over the five years...weather we haven't experienced in the 15 years prior to that period.

The areas proposed for logging have major concentrations of trees between 80-160 years old, which science shows accumulate and store the most carbon in the fight against climate change compared to young trees. The Green Mountain Forest has greater carbon density than most forests in the Eastern US; we should manage this public land for the benefit of the climate and biodiversity, not cut it down.

The largest 1% of trees store 30% of all aboveground forest carbon in the US. We should not be spending our tax dollars to subsidize cutting old trees. Our children and grandchildren alive today will bear the brunt of the climate catastrophe that is happening all around us. The International Panel on Climate Change states that time is running out for action. On the global scale, forest protection represents approximately half or more of the climate change mitigation needed to hold temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Research also shows that New England's forests could store two to four times more carbon if we just let them grow old.

Letting these old trees stand is one of the most effective things that I, as a Vermonter and a mother who wants to preserve a future for generations to come, can do.

We must put our public forests on a different path.

Barbara Murphy-Warrington and Sons