

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/13/2023 1:19:53 AM

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Comments: I am writing to convey my sincere distress over the proposed logging at Telephone Gap. The Forest Service must think we as Vermonters, or more broadly New Englanders, are naive if the claim that logging one of the few remaining older forests in our state is for the forest's benefit. It is the height of hubris to imply that humans are needed to manage what nature composed long before our evolution and will continue to orchestrate long after we are gone. Not only does this supposed "caretaking" undercut the benefit older growth provides in terms of carbon sequestration and fresh air production, but, perhaps most critically, it denies our race the humility necessary to walk back from our own destruction.

There is a long history in this region of clearcutting that our forefathers undertook in the name of progress; they voraciously consumed what nature took centuries to build and our just inheritance is but the shame of their folly. In repeating their plunder with this additional acreage at Telephone Gap the Forest Service is fooling no one into believing this is selflessly motivated for the benefit of the helpless tree surrounded creatures or Sun deprived little saplings. This is as it has always been: economically based and narcissistically narrow minded.

I recognize that the trees at Telephone Gap do not meet the dictionary definition of "old growth," but at the rate at which our centenarian forests are harvested our descendants are doomed to never know the concept. Vermont does not want, nor need Potemkin alternatives to genuine forest management and we demand the Forest Service recognize the short sighted benefit of turning the tourism opportunity inherent in this unique and irreplaceable forest into a stack of 2x4s. Every one of us deserves the chance to experience the wonder of feeling small while standing amid a grove of towering, seemingly ageless trees and, especially given the increasingly prevent consequences of climate change, ecotourism is the wisest choice for our states forestry future.