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Comments: In these times of climate crisis, we should be finding a different perspective on the forest industry. The Telephone Gap project would release huge amounts of carbon into the atmosphere, as the proposed cut is in mature and old growth healthy forest, which forest type stores the greatest amount of carbon. While it is true that young forests have a greater sequestration rate for carbon than mature forests, the carbon storage is primarily in older, larger trees. And even if native tree seedlings were replanted after the cut, they would not begin to sequester carbon for 10-15 years, by which time we will be deep into climate chaos. Telephone Gap should be left uncut, as a carbon reserve.

Another concern is plant biodiversity, especially at ground level. One can replant the major tree species, but the trilliums, native orchids species, ferns, mosses and other herb-layer plants may not come back for a century or more. And the mycorrhizae within the soil that has profound effects on the health of the trees tends to get burned out after a clear cut, and may not recover for a long time.

Thirdly, the Telephone Gap forest protects several watersheds, both by acting as a sink for rainwater and by preventing soil erosion into streams, lakes, and reservoirs.

For all these reasons, I am asking you to rethink the Telephone Gap project, and make it into a carbon reserve instead.