

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/13/2023 6:02:35 PM

First name: Dale

Last name: LaBonte

Organization: Verizon Wireless

Title:

Comments: Telephone Gap, as part of one of the few remaining intact forest corridors in the Northeast, should be protected from natural resource extraction, i.e. logging. It is of critical importance to wildlife to retain contiguous forests in order to protect habitat for endangered species as well as to take advantage of their ability to cool, retain moisture, and sequester carbon (not just in trees, but in wetland soils as well). The disruption caused by logging only increases the harm to these important ecosystems: it compacts soils, redirects stream flows, gouges trunks of trees that remain, and disturbs the underground mycorrhizal web that sustains plant life. Finally, the creation of new openings invites invasive species to take hold and degrade remaining forest patches.

New research consistently demonstrates that our trees and forests are critical to our quality of life, maybe even our survival on the planet. With 34% of plant species, 40% of animal species, and 41% of ecosystems at risk of extinction (<https://www.natureserve.org/bif>), this is not the time to permit logging of mature trees in what little remains of our wild forested land.