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First name: John

Last name: Hoffman

Organization: Wilder Brook Farm

Title: Owner

Comments: To the Forest Service: Dear Friends, I write to say that I find the proposed project ill advised. Because I run a farm in northern Massachusetts, I know that what you choose to do in Vermont effects me. I have a stake in this a matter.

We have vast amounts of forested land in New England. There is more than enough timber on private land to support our forest industries, which are critical to our regional economy. But the issue for State Lands, it seems to me, is to be a bell weather for best practices. The age of the forests being proposed for cutting are between 75-100 years old. They represent late succession stands which, uncut, will prosper for at least another 75-100 years. In that period of time, they will make a greater contribution to carbon storage, than any new forest which might grow up in their absence.

We occupy a critical moment for carbon storage in order to reduce the severity of the already changing climate. Temperatures are rising. The fall of rain is becoming less predicable. As a farmer, these realities impinge on us now. I want Vermont to be a leader in modeling best practices. Older forests hold more carbon. Dispute that if you can. Beyond removing carbon from the atmosphere, uncut forests are beautiful; they are restorative to walk in; they offer sanctuary to myriads of animal and bird species; they recall Vermont's history. They deserve protection.