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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Green Mountain National Forest,

I very strongly oppose the Telephone Gap project. I am a Vermonter and I visit the Green Mountain National Forest regularly. I have hiked Telephone Gap. This area, which includes roadless (priceless!!) forest, is recovering after being hammered by logging over a century ago. Why must we repeat the mistakes of the past? We have vast amounts of ecological knowledge that we did not have the last time we cut down New England's forests and when the National Forests were first designated. Doesn't this current knowledge justify doing things differently now?

There is no doubt you're aware of the climate chaos we face now and what is coming down the pipeline. Forest like this are ground zero. We can leave them be so that they continue to absorb carbon, or we can road them, log them, destroy them-adding more fuel to this existential crisis upon all of us.

Speaking of the climate crisis, the Biden administration has pledged to tackle this problem, but how can the administration be taken seriously when its land managers propose a logging plan like this, which has been named one of the 10 worst, in the entire US, for the climate? How can the administration claim to care about climate change solutions on one hand, while on the other hand its land managers propose to cut down and destroy old forests, the very same public lands that are helping us avoid some of the worst effects of climate change, and which can do so much more for humans (and wildlife) if only we leave them alone and let them continue to grow old? We have the science to support letting these trees and these forests be! To pretend otherwise, or that this logging has any time of useful or positive purpose, would be laughable if this issue weren't so dire.

This project is being peddled as a means to help forest "diversity" and certain wildlife species, but this is disingenuous at best. The forest, if we have the restraint to continue to leave it alone, will diversify even more over time through natural events that always do a better job at shaping nature than humans ever can. As for wildlife, what wildlife do we need to help? Vermont has always been a forested state, one where openings in the forest canopy are brought about by wind and other natural events. Why are these natural events no longer sufficient in the eyes of the Forest Service? The animals that were present in the past were those that live in and evolved with the forest. They do not need our help. The last thing we should be doing is destroying a forest like this which is home to so many species. Where will the wildlife that's here go if you cut down Telephone Gap?

There is so little time left. We should be saving our public lands, especially places like Telephone Gap that are recovering from our past harms. This project is nothing more than a short-sighted scheme to make money at the expense of the forest, its wildlife, and all of its visitors who love these public lands for what they are and what they provide-a very rare refuge for both native wildlife and for humans who need places like this, where nature is left alone.

Please do the right thing and drop this logging plan. Do not build more roads in the National Forest. Do not cut down old (or any) trees in Telephone Gap. Let Telephone Gap grow older and wilder, for all of us, for the wildlife who can't live anywhere else, and for those who come after us and will only know a poorer version of this beautiful, vital, and living place if we destroy it.

Thank you.

Dawn Serra and James Lennox