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Comments: I am writing to urge the USFS to alter the plan to harvest nearly 12,000 acres of maturing northern hardwoods in the Telephone Gap area of the GMNF. Please don't take those maturing hardwood trees. Such trees are our best shot at sequestering the maximum amount of planet-warming carbon over the short period of time that remains to act before we tip into a much warmer climate.

The trees are acting by growing. Let this piece of forest and others remain undisturbed to reach their full potential as carbon sinks, water keepers, and a haven for non-game wildlife.

The relative remoteness of the proposed harvest area is a large part of its value as habitat for animals and our native plants. Skid roads are easy avenues for harmful invasive plants to travel. I see this everywhere I go, on private and public lands. To create such avenues into a remote and undisturbed forest parcel will do it a great disservice. I definitely am on board with the concept of accommodating multiple uses within our public lands, yet I believe the crisis of a rapidly warming climate requires that we prioritize crisis mitigation.

The Forest Service holds such gems in its hands. As stewards, you have the power and opportunity to use the treasure of our forests to address the pressing concerns of this moment in time. Let the trees grow for now, and safeguard the complex ecosystem they are a part of.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak my piece.