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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello. My name is Patty Heather-Lea. I live in Bristol, Vermont. I am a retired public high school math teacher. I am 73 years old. I am also a Quaker. I am moved to reach you.

I understand that the US Forest Service recently released a proposal for the management of the Telephone Gap region of the Green Mountain National Forest near the town of Chittenden; that this proposal includes the logging of 12,000 acres of trees, many of which are up to 160 years old.

If this information is factual, I request that this proposal be changed so that more old growth and mature trees can have the chance to continue living and thriving.

In September of 2021, I wrote a letter to the editor of the Addison Independent in Middlebury, VT. It was printed. I am taking that writing and bringing parts to you right here.

Who manages our forests, here in Vermont? Can we enlarge the idea of "managing" forests to become, being a good steward of our forests? Can the managing system be open to the idea of inviting a representation of Western Abenaki to become part of the decision making regarding our forests? And this Western Abenaki representation must NOT be a token. It must carry weight. The Western Abenaki have lived here much longer. I think they have some wisdom to share.

If timber is to be harvested, why does clear-cutting have to happen? Are forests even a place for timber harvesting? Can timber be "grown" on certain land outside the forests? Don't we need to leave trees alone, so that they can do their vital photosynthesis work? (light + carbon dioxide + water transform into sugar+ oxygen) Yes, we human beings need to breathe first before we get carried away with consumption.

Here are more questions: If a forest is to be "restored", does it not need a balance of native trees that were originally there, in that old-growth forest? Biodiversity is reduced, isn't it? A forest is NOT a place for one single species of fast growing trees, so that they can be harvested, once again in X years. Are herbicides applied to the land where trees to be harvested are . grown? Clear-cutting affects erosion, does it not? What percentage of our forests are allowed to be turned over to timber harvesting? How does "logging" impact our waterways? In addition to clean air we, as humans., also need clean water. It is vital and imperative that we "manage" our forests with long term wisdom.

We need a wise team of people to solve these problems we are facing in our lives. Who are the stewards of our forests? How do we communicate with each other? How do we express our gratitude to the trees, the water, the air, the soil, the animals, the plants, ... ? How do we learn lessons regarding taking no more than we need and sharing what we have?

Thank you for reading and reflecting.