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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My name is Susan Randall. My family has been in Wonalancet, New Hampshire for over 200 years. I will be buried here beside my ancestors, at the foot of these mountains and forests. The forest behind our home here is one of the most pristine and untouched pieces of wilderness we have left in this world. There is old tree growth here, and that is proving to be a very rare thing in this world. Mature and old-growth forests are the only proven, cost-effective carbon capture and storage technology we have. We simply have to let these trees grow. We have so many better other options than to harvest these trees. My family originally gave much of our land to the national forest in order to protect the forest. I saw the "Sandwich Vegetation Management Plan" to cut down 650 acres of our forest. I do not want to hear and see the machines roll in and log it the way that was done when I was a child. I have awful memories of seeing the large swaths of clearcut patches on the mountains, like big skinned knees. The forest felt as if it had been horribly assaulted. I remember being horrified by the loud trucks, machines and the ravaged landscape. What had been a very peaceful woods with clear brooks and wild animals and hikers, became a muddy destroyed wasteland. It has taken my whole lifetime to recover. Please do not let this happen again. Why not consider the huge advantages of leaving this forest alone? We are in the midst of a real climate crisis on the planet. In July, I watched the state of Vermont flood all around me. And then weeks later, I experienced temperatures over 118 degrees, and watched as the country of Greece burned. Next it was Maui, and Canada. We need to be strengthening our precious forests in NH, and cherishing these expanses of mature and old-growth forests that still exist on our lands. So many parts of the world are watching destruction all around them. It is critical to the health, prosperity, and resilience of our world- particularly in light of the extreme weather of this past summer. These forests in NH provide clean air and water, they sustain untold plant and animal life. The survival of these old trees is fundamental to combatting the global climate and biodiversity crises. This forest holds a special importance to me personally, and to my extended whole family, above and below the ground. We all go deep into these woods to hike, camp, meditate and swim in the clear streams. We go to the forest to revitalize our souls and connect us to history and nature. I beg you, please leave these woods alone. They are worth SO MUCH MORE than mere lumber. Especially now, as we watch the world burning around us. Thank you for listening. Susan Randall