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Comments: The proposed timber harvest is consistent with the direction set forth and adopted in the 2005 WMNF forest plan. By federal law, that plan is the principle operative document that regulates where and how timber harvesting can occur on the WMNF. The plan took several years to develop and represented a negotiated compromise on the part of many individuals, groups, agencies and municipalities with interests in the future of the WMNF. That plan included significant new additions to designated wilderness areas by passage of the 2006 New England Wilderness Act, including the addition of 10,800 acres to the Sandwich wilderness area, increasing this wilderness from the pre-existing 25,000 acres to 35,800 acres. This addition was broadly supported but it was conditioned on the expectation by many that lands in and around the Sandwich Range that remained in the 2.1 land designation would continue to be available for forest management. I was very involved in negotiations on behalf of the Society for the Protection of NH Forests, for whom I worked as vice president of policy and land management from 1997 to 2005. I supported the plan then, and I support it now. To the extent that the Sandwich Vegetation Management Project is consistent with direction set in that plan, and undertaken consistent with all applicable federal laws and regulations, it should be approved without undue delay. Of course, any one may express objections to timber harvesting in this area, or any timber harvesting on the WMNF. However, the most appropriate venue for individuals to express objections related to higher level management direction for the WMNF is not project level decisions, but the next forest planning process.