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Comments: The Granite State Division of the Society of American Foresters supports the proposed Sandwich Vegetation Management Project. Responsible timber harvesting serves a critical role in achieving social, environmental and economic values on publicly-owned forests. Scientific and social analysis shows that responsible harvesting following best management practices (BMPs) is an effective mechanism for maintaining and/or restoring healthy, diverse forests across the landscape.

These forests provide climate-based benefits, such as high levels of carbon sequestration, the growth of timber products that can contribute to long-term carbon storage, and an increased resilience to future climate-related disturbances (e.g., drought, flooding, new pest and pathogen regimes). In addition, many of these benefits can be realized while also meeting other management objectives for people and wildlife.

The proposed silvicultural treatments are appropriate for meeting the desired future conditions developed in the forest plan. These treatments are based on sound ecological science and will create much-needed early successional stands. Active forest management is essential for sustaining and restoring wildlife habitats, key habitat elements and species that rely on early successional forests.