

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/22/2023 3:31:33 AM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To walk in our undisturbed, roadless, near-old growth forest in the Sandwich Range is a truly magical experience. Far too few people get to have this, but thankfully there are protections of our public forests making them accessible to all so that even from the city the prospect that one might pick up and go this weekend or winter or spring can offer a vicarious experience, relief or hope. That I get to have this experience every day feels unbelievably lucky and equally undeserved. So from the privilege of home at the foot of the Blueberry Ledge Trail, I feel a strong and compelling duty to protect what has been given to me and to all of us - especially now as increasingly we read and experience the very real and accelerating threat of climate change.

President Biden signed Executive Order 14072 on Earth Day in Seattle as rampant fires were burning across the west destroying thousands of homes, thousands of forested acres and leaving air hardly breathable hundreds of miles away. We all know what has caused climate change and we have all been warned of the possible or likely catastrophic effects if we do not act immediately to stem and reverse it. The primary goal of the executive order is clear- carbon sequestration is of utmost importance and old and mature growth forests are one of our very best tools to achieve it.

The Forest Service Management Project 57392 makes a good effort to avoid this imperative that we should all be embracing, relying instead on its outdated plan of 2005, technically legal because congress has not appropriated the funds to bring it in line with the stunning discoveries in silviculture in the last 18 years. The plan is thin on supportive documents and sources and unpersuasive in its conclusions of insignificant impact. The refusal to offer meaningful alternatives as required feels frankly disrespectful. Suggesting that tampering with less than 0.1% of the national forest is insignificant is like my saying I'm driving only one car. The removal of 6 million board feet is a significant action in relationship to the alternative of a plan that is centered on letting our mature forest grow naturally old, sequestering ever more carbon, maintaining its resilience and hopefully being there for centuries to come... but only if we - all of us - do everything we can now.

Less than 10 % of New Hampshire's forest are protected. We see around us continually the loaded logging trucks and clear-cut acres; there are few if any protections for the privately owned forested acres we are losing. We have an obligation toward the forests that are publicly held and can best thrive as a continuous ecosystem. I am asking you to cancel the current plan so that this precious natural resource is allowed, in its entirety, to continue undisturbed.