

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 10/22/2023 11:35:51 PM

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Comments: As a concerned resident I feel the US forest service needs to be more transparent about the reasoning for choosing clearcutting as the best management practice for the proposed logging project in the Sandwich Range. I feel a full environmental impact assessment should be completed as such action will have clear negative impacts on essential habitat, and the forest's ability to provide critical flood mitigation, clean water, and carbon storage. With all the research out there proving the need to increase wildlife corridors and the need for contiguous forests rather than fragmented forests, how does clear cutting make any sense?

The US Forest Service uses euphemisms like "forest restoration," "habitat improvement," and "even-age management" to excuse outdated commercial logging practices that degrade forest health, jeopardize water quality, and endanger biodiversity. Logging, road construction, skid trails, and the likely use of herbicides all serve to degrade and fragment habitat for rare and imperiled species that prefer old and interior forests, and risk harming downstream communities. The Northern Long-eared Bat is a federally endangered species that prefers older forests and is assumed to be within the project area. Yet the White Mountain National Forest does not intend to survey for the bats before logging, and is planning to log forests when bats would be most vulnerable (i.e. when they are not hibernating in caves during the winter). In addition to their impacts on habitat, logging threatens to introduce invasive species, worsen local water quality, and heighten the risk of flooding.

Ultimately, I am surprised, saddened and disgusted that in 2023 with climate change knocking at our door, the US forest service would choose to clear cut any section of forest (no matter its age) when other alternatives such as selective cutting could be implemented.