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Comments: In terms of the Telephone Gap IRP, I am strongly opposed to all GMNF Alternatives except Alternative A, which will put Telephone Gap on hold at least until early 2025, when the US Forest Service will do a nationwide Forest Plan amendment process. All other Alternatives do nothing to preserve this precious resource- our old growth forests. The current GMNF plan completed in 2006 is 18 years outdated; it should not be driving decisions about Telephone Gap management, given the accelerated pace of climate change we have all witnessed.

Given President Biden's Executive Order curtailing the logging of old growth forests, it is imperative that GMNF revisit evidence of the importance of Telephone Gap in slowing the pace of climate change. Scientists have known for quite some time that plants-especially trees-are big-time absorbers of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. A 2011 study tried to quantify the worldwide effect and reported a net global forest sink of as much as 1.1 petagrams-1.1 billion metric tons-of carbon per year. According to the EPA's calculator, that means the world's forests annually remove carbon from the atmosphere equivalent to that contained in nearly 54 million tanker trucks' worth of gasoline.

The Biden administration has been emphasizing the importance of "nature-based solutions" as part of plans to address climate change. An oft-cited 2017 article in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences found that such tools, including preventing the loss of forests, could account for more than one-third of carbon-mitigation needed to limit climate change to 2 degrees by the year 2030.

Please review the importance of old growth forests and do not log any area of old growth trees on in Telephone Gap in the future, for the sake of our children and grandchildren, who all have chosen to live in Vermont.