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Comments: I agree with other commenters that the comment period for this project is inadequate and serves only to deliberately exclude and constrain public input. The GMNF received a record number of public comments during the scoping period in 2023, from all around the state and region, yet there was no effort, nothing at all, to ensure that copies of project documents are available at town libraries, town offices, or regional planning commissions. For meaningful input and comments, people need details and accessibility to maps. I myself have committed a week to studying project maps and documents. An enormous amount of time goes into opening / loading documents and scrolling across them. If you wish to put a price on my "commentary involvement", let's go with somewhere approaching \$1,900, excluding fuel for making a trip to obtain printed documents. That's a lot of personal time and money; can everyone afford that? I submit NO, not in the socio-economic realities of the present.

If one purpose of NEPA policy is to engage the public and gather comments from those parties "interested and affected", the Telephone Gap IRP has been a demonstration of failure in that regard. The GMNF is tasked to engage the public in a successful manner; it is NOT incumbent on the public to navigate a maze of difficulties in seeking to engage. When public engagement does not measure up, it is the agency that failed. We know the interest exists; we have 1600+ examples of that interest. Roadblocking access to large, detailed maps and creating overly aggressive (short) comment periods is obstruction. If it's too expensive for the Forest Service to print documents (even if only maps), to mail documents, and to invest in updating the expired 2006 Forest Plan, why would we expect the agency to honor input and follow through on project mitigations and remediations? If we know the future funds carry any degree of uncertainty, that calls for a serious reduction in the scope of new and existing projects. Partners and friends groups are not a reasonable fall-back, not without transparency and analysis of what the "special relationships" would involve.

Again, I do not see the agency doing anything but the bare minimum to fulfill NEPA requirements, and the impact of that weak effort will be a lack of community trust in upcoming decades.

Thank you.