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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello,

I am writing regarding the Telephone Gap Integrated Resource Project, and to express my dismay at your plans to take down 12,000 acres of forested area. I was shocked and outraged upon learning of this project, and urge you to accept Plan A - 'No Action,' and to prioritize maintaining the ecosystems and biodiversity in the Green Mountain National Forest. Only 0.3% of New England forests are older than 150 years, and the area selected for this project is on its way to becoming an 'old-growth' forest. The benefits of this for climate and ecosystem stability cannot be understated, and old-growth forests' ability to sequester large amounts of carbon alone should be enough to counter your plans. I urge you to prioritize protecting all of this forested area, rather than further contributing to climate chaos and ecosystem destruction in this area and more broadly. The effects of climate change have already reached a point at which much cannot be saved or salvaged, and Vermont residents are beginning to feel the direct effects of that (i.e., floods this past summer, crop loss, extreme temperature, climate refugees, etc.). To cut down healthy forest in the context of this is a move that will have disastrous and irreversible consequences, and is one that I believe cannot be justified on any level. Moving forward with this project is to completely disregard the well-being of the earth and the people who depend upon it, and is something we simply cannot afford. Please pause and consider the impact you are going to have upon the stability of this region as climate change accelerates, and make the choice to not make an already overwhelming problem even worse.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Ashley Van Riper