

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 4/7/2024 4:00:00 AM

First name: Scott

Last name: Allen

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Mr. Strand and Mr. Mattrick:

I have read the 2006 Forest Plan and the 4 options presented on 8 March 2024.

Please address the following issues before moving forward with your decision.

First, I want to stress that I am not adverse to the project itself, but I have numerous concerns about its scale and impact. My immediate concern is ensuring that my property will be protected during and after the completion of this project.

In order to access a significant portion of alternatives B, C, and D you have to cross my land. In 1945 a 12'x 367' right of way was established to cross my land to access Chaffee Chittenden Forest in perpetuity. The USFS purchased this land and retained right of way access across my land to reach the National Forest. I fully expect the USFS to honor the 12'x 367' right of way by not attempting to widen, remove trees, to include wounding any trees beyond the 12' width over the next 10-15 years while timber is being harvested and transported. The current road is 12' wide. Beyond the 12' road is an extremely steep and extremely saturated wet slope which my home sits above. The current vegetation on the slope along with ditching and culverts stabilizes this steep slope. Any further disturbance beyond the 12' width will destabilize the slope thus increasing chances of a landslide. According to the Vermont Geological Survey, in 2023 alone, there were 82 landslides across Vermont. Please address this concern.

Also, what is the policy for maintaining the 12'x 367' right of way over the next decade while timber is being harvested and transported? Is funding in place to cover the road maintenance over the next decade to maintain and/or repair the right of way? Funding needs to be in place in perpetuity after the project is completed as the Velomont Connector Trail will be utilizing the right of way. I have attended 3 meetings over the last year regarding the Telephone Gap Project. At each meeting I have asked about funding to maintain the right of way and each time I was told there was no money to improve the road. Please address these concerns.

Currently, alternative plans B, C, and D have two stands of clearcutting that are abutting my property. Stands 22 and 24 are both going to be clearcut on alternative plans B, C, and D. Both stands 22 and 24 are directly above my home on steep terrain. My current ditching and culverts cannot withstand any additional runoff both during and after the proposed harvest. Also, stands 22 and 24 are both steep and extremely wet year round with numerous springs and runoff. The likelihood of flooding and/or landslides above my home are increased with the proposed clearcuts in stands 22 and 24. Please address these concerns.

There are multiple other stands on alternative plans B, C, and D all located on steep uphill terrain above my property/home. I see no mitigations currently in place on either alternative plans B, C, or D that would reduce the threat of flooding and or landslides to my property and home. Please address these concerns.

Currently, I object with your analysis.

Proposed alternative plans B, C, and D do not take into consideration my property and the threats the project activities presents to my property to include the right of way needed to access the project area.

Please address my concerns with quantifiable measures.

If you cannot mitigate the risk to my property caused by the proposed activities of either alternative plans B, C, or D then do not move forward with either of these options. As of now, plan A is the only viable option presented that will not cause damage to my property and home.