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"Every tree in the forest is a fountain, sucking water out of the ground through its roots and releasing water vapor into the atmosphere through pores in its foliage. In their billions, they create giant rivers of water in the air - rivers that form clouds and create rainfall hundreds or even thousands of miles away. But as we shave the planet of trees, we risk drying up these aerial rivers and the lands that depend on them for rain."

50% of our planets on land rainfall is generated by forests. At a time when we are facing increasing droughts it is suicidal to remove this critical source of fresh water.

According to the Global Commission on the Economics of Water Report of 2024

<https://watercommission.org/#report>

"The water crisis threatens more than 50% of global food production and risks shaving an average of 8% off countries' GDPs by 2050, with much higher losses of up to 15% projected in low-income countries.

We must embed the value of green water systematically in decisions on land use so as to better protect evapotranspiration hotspots such as forests, wetlands, and watersheds."

Forest trees provide the enormous benefits such as stabilizing local climate by transferring heat from land surfaces to higher in the atmosphere and buffering temperature extremes. On a global scale, forests reduce earth's temperature about 0.5 degrees C. Trees release water vapor and biogenic volatile organic compounds (BVOCs) which promotes cloud formation, and contributes further to cooling and formation of condensation nuclei, more cloud formation, and ultimately precipitation. Intact forests play an enormous role in global and regional terrestrial water cycles.

It is beyond dispute that killing trees not only releases carbon into the atmosphere, but also sacrifices a critical pathway for carbon absorption long into the future. Due to decades of logging, American forests now have far less biomass than they would have if managed by mother nature. Deforestation is a key accelerant of the climate crisis.

Our hope for avoiding climate catastrophe rests on the carbon equation of the next decade, not decades from now when trees cut down could be replaced with regrowth.

Mature and old-growth forests excel at removing and storing carbon from the atmosphere. And yet, 92% of the areas proposed for logging in the Telephone Gap timber sale are classified as mature or old by the Green Mountain National Forest.

Mature and old forests matter for a lot more reasons than the carbon that they store.

Old forests excel at removing the phosphorus and nitrogen that drive algal blooms and dead zones in our rivers, lakes, and ponds. And they are exceptional at reducing the impacts of both floods and droughts, by slowing, sinking, and storing water.

Logging requires road building and skid trails leaving lasting ecosystem damage: soil compaction, surface erosion, increased stream sedimentation, degraded water quality and aquatic habitat, reduced biodiversity, spread of invasive vegetation, and suppression of forest regeneration.

Logging damages remaining trees, and does not "restore" forest health. Through underground mazes of roots, fungi, and bacteria called "mycorrhizal networks," trees share resources like water and nutrients, helping each other survive stresses. Forest thinning disrupts these mycorrhizal networks leaving remaining trees more vulnerable to disease, pest attack, and drought, shortening their life span.

Research by the University of Vermont shows that New England forests could store 2 to 4 times more carbon if we just let them grow old. Letting mature and old trees stand is one of the most effective things that we can do to combat climate change and extinction.

Private forests are the source of 96% of the timber supply in Vermont, so protecting public forests would have minimal impact on the wood products economy. We must put our public forests on a different path.

Please cancel this destructive project that has absolutely no public benefit and would accelerate and exacerbate climate change and extinction.