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First name: Emily

Last name: Ruff

Organization: Sage Mountain Botanical Sanctuary

Title: Director

Comments: I am writing to express my objection to the Green Mountain National Forest's reckless Telephone Gap logging project. I am expressly requesting that this logging project be cancelled.

I am a resident of Orange Vermont in a rural area. I am a forest landowner, and a frequent visitor to GMNF broadly, and Telephone Gap specifically, for both recreation and scientific research and documentation.

This project violates Vermont's mandate to protect endangered species. The Telephone Gap area is home to extremely rare species, including the Canada Lynx. Despite proof of the presence of Lynx in the Telephone Gap project area, the Forest Service stated in the Telephone Gap Biological Evaluation that "the gray wolf and Canada lynx are not known to occur within the project area on the GMNF, [and] they are not likely to occur within the project area in the foreseeable future." This is patently inaccurate, and the Forest Service must go back and analyze potential impacts to lynx.

This project also violates Vermont's mandate to protect Old Growth Forest. The Telephone Gap logging project would cut 817 stand acres of old growth, a significant figure considering that the US Forest Service estimated in June that there are only 2,000-acres of old-growth in the 400,000-acre Green Mountain National Forest. In other words, only 0.5% of the entire forest is old growth, and the Telephone Gap project threatens this extraordinarily important and rare habitat.

Finally, this project violates Vermont's mandate to protect at all measures against the impact of a changing climate. The Telephone Gap project would release 254,556 tons CO₂e, the equivalent of driving more than 60,000 average passenger vehicles for a year. This is the climate impact from just one of the National Forest's logging projects - the Early Successional Habitat Creation, Robinson, Somerset, and other recent projects are all on a similar scale, and conceivably are already releasing similar or greater amounts of climate pollution.

I implore you to demand the immediate cancellation of the Green Mountain National Forest Telephone Gap Logging Project.