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Comments: As a resident of the Otter Creek watershed and frequent user of U. S. Forest Service land, I am writing to express my deep distrust of the planning and proposal process base on what I have witnessed over the past few years. The Telephone Gap Integrated Resource Project as currently proposed still has several glaring flaws that should result in an immediate cancellation of the project's implementation.

Firstly, and most egregiously; according the U.S. Forest Service's own estimation only 2,000 acres of old growth forest exists in the entirety of the Green Mountain National Forest, yet this proposal allows the destruction of 817 of those acres. This would reduce the acreage of one of Vermont's rarest ecosystems by nearly half in order to replace it with one of the most common. This fact alone should shock anyone who cares about the environment and endangered species. It is completely unacceptable.

Next, although a rare and endangered Canada Lynx was recently photographed in front of the USFS office in Mendon, the project proposal makes the absurd claim that no Canada lynx are likely to live in the nearby project area. This is a grossly disingenuous use of the narrowest possible determination for the purpose of pushing through a plan very likely to cause harm to at least one endangered species.

Lastly, the project if implemented is estimated to release 254,556 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere at a time when climate change-caused disasters are ravaging the world and we need to be drastically reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

The Telephone Gap plan is clearly a terrible idea aimed primarily at delivering some of Vermont's vanishingly rare old growth forests to logging interests. It should be cancelled permanently.