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Title:

Comments: MY PURPOSE IS TO PRESERVE THE INTERIOR FOREST HABITAT OF OLD GROWTH FORESTS AND TO PRESERVE NATURAL BIODIVERSITY.

I object to the opening of Road-less areas, use of chemicals and burn techniques at Telephone Gap. I object to engineering for species from warmer climates rather than letting the forest naturally adapt to climate change. I object to the rationalization for logging to "help" the forest, when it is clearly a ruse that supports the logging industry. There is enough forest to meet our needs outside Public Forests. National and State Forests are a nominal contribution towards wood product needs. I object to the flimsy rationale of creating early successional habitat when we need to prioritize complex mature forests instead. Your agency should be looking along power and road corridors and your back 40 for early succession. It's right in front of you in all these nicely trimmed unused fields.

There should be no timber Harvest in Telephone Gap.

If the changes to come at Telephone Gap stated in the EA don't constitute a significant environmental impact, that is an illogical conclusion. An Environmental Impact Statement is clearly needed for this project: Profound changes are proposed in this plan.

I am making a plea to the Forest Service to choose ALTERNATIVE 1 at Telephone Gap. Public Forests are the Commons- they are for the benefit of all species. I am shocked that 11,800 acres are slated to be logged or "treated" at Telephone Gap. While the Forest Service's Plan is attention grabbing, it misses the fact that the best protection for biodiversity and earth's climate is to let forests mature. Animals of the forest need wild Untrammelled Mature Forests. Old growth forests are the best means to store carbon! Science tells us that young forests do not store carbon adequately. The Forest Service's plan is wrong-headed and destructive to the wild places which have been able to come back in the last 60-150 years. This project is primarily of benefit to the lumber industry. Nature knows what it is doing concerning adaptation and does not need to be engineered for "best yields." Nature can make the evolutionary steps in a warming climate. That you would plant oak trees or clear cut for early succession species in a National Forest is unconscionable. We need more Old Growth Forests. We can source local wood in Vermont- but 96% of our wood products come from the private sector- Let the Public Forests become old forests for the benefit of all species and earth's climate: This has been mandated by our federal and state governments.

Below are major points stated in the Telephone Gap Preliminary Environmental Assessment that are objectionable on the face of it. These proposals necessitate an Environmental Impact Statement and the cessation of all activity on the ground.

From Preliminary Environmental Assessment:

- * Forest Plan Goal 2 is to maintain and restore the quality, amount, and distribution of habitats to produce viable and sustainable populations of native and --desirable non-native plants and animals.? (?!?)

- *While some of the composition and age class objectives may be met through natural processes, vegetation management such as commercial timber harvest, prescribed fire, (herbicides) and other treatments are often used to restore and enhance diversity of habitat types and structure.

- * 93 percent of suitable lands within the project area are occupied by northern hardwoods and can be actively managed to -alter habitat composition-

- * Plan calls for reducing the hardwoods from present 75% of forest to 20%

- These actions call for an Environmental Impact Statement.

- Nature should be left to naturally evolve towards its future in an integrated natural way- not by engineering the forest per human preferences..

- We don't want "non-native plants and animals."

- "Alternative A will have a negligible effect on increased Invasive Species, while B,C and D will have" an effect

and result in extensive remedial actions needed in order to mitigate the damage. Taking Alternative A is a clear choice

--This "diversity of habitats" has no place on Public Land where Old Growth is the best bet for maintaining forest health, biodiversity and mitigating climate change. Creation of habitat for hunting is wrong-headed. It serves the few and destroys the contiguous mature forests which forest species and humankind need. This early successional habitat exists in other places and can be furthered where it exists in abundance. We need Old Growth Forests.

The FOREST SERVICE SHOULD NOT BE CAUSING SUCH A DISRUPTION AS IS BEING PLANNED IN TELEPHONE GAP.

Thank you,
Frank White