Data Submitted (UTC 11): 5/1/2025 1:06:27 AM
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Comments: I strongly oppose the Lost River Integrated Resource Project, which proposes over 1,000 acres of commercial logging - including more than 200 acres of clearcuts - in a wild, ecologically sensitive, and less-traveled area of the White Mountain National Forest. This plan threatens habitat for over a dozen imperiled species and undermines the ecological integrity of one of the wildest regions in New England.
More than 91% of the proposed logging is within Inventoried Roadless Areas near Mt. Moosilauke and Elbow Pond - areas that should remain untouched. Logging in these roadless areas threatens water quality, wildlife habitat, and climate resilience. Once roads and clearcuts enter these places, their wild character and ecological function are forever diminished.
It's especially disturbing that the Forest Service admits the project is "Likely to Adversely Affect" the endangered Northern Long-eared Bat. Public lands should serve as safe havens for species already on the brink - not be handed over for extraction that worsens their decline.
The draft Environmental Assessment fails to adequately consider carbon emissions, climate impacts, or alternatives to logging. It leans heavily on unsupported and conclusory statements and glosses over real threats to water quality, biodiversity, and the climate. The public deserves a science-based, honest review - not a rubber-stamped justification for more unnecessary logging.
I urge the Forest Service to withdraw the Lost River Project and prioritize ecological protection, climate resilience, and public interest over outdated and destructive logging practices. Our national forests are too important to sacrifice.