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First name: Elaine

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Summary: Against this project!

I have been watching this forest grow for the past 40+years. I very much love this side of the White Mountains. I've driven Rte. 118 and 112 a thousand times. It is a lovely area of WMNF, less frequently visited. As you have seen by the debacle at Artist Bluff last summer where it was inundated with fall foliage visitors, we need to open additional spaces for recreation and enjoyment of the public forests - for the people and not for wood money. Former Governor Sununu basically said that people need to find less-traveled areas in NH. Hello!!! This area is a great candidate! NH is running out of needed maturing forests! There will be no foliage viewing opportunity in your 200+ acre clearcuts. Carbon storage is better in older forests than younger forests and we need these older forests to counteract climate change that we humans have brought on to ourselves. Additionally, this area is home to the long-eared bat. Every project you essentially ignore them. When it goes extinct, their demise bat blood will be on your hands.

I am sooooo glad Dartmouth owns most of Moosilauke so you don't get your grubby saws on most of it.

I am against the scale of this project and so much healthy, maturing habitat that you will - YOU WILL - destroy. Not to mention that someone is going to get killed on that steep side of Rte 118. It's already dangerous enough with the garbage trucks weaving over the double yellow lines unable to control the steep and windy curves.

This area is an immense watershed that should not be so brutally disturbed. You cannot reasonably predict what will happen downstream. It's a crap shoot and the risk is too great for detrimental effects.

Elbow Pond - so steeped in many memories for many recreationists, local and abroad. The birds in there are fantastic. Species that like the higher elevation boreal/swampy/slow stream/forested/quiet environment. Where do they go now? To Tarleton - um, no, that's going to be cut. To Peabody? Um, no, sorry that's on the chopping block. Maybe bang a left to Vermont Telephone Gap region - sorry, I guess you gotta figure out an alternative. If not, your numbers will decline for future children to enjoy and maybe you go extinct. I think you get my drift.

More than 91% of all proposed logging in the Lost River IRP is within 2 Inventoried Roadless Areas: one on the slopes of Mt Moosilauke, and one surrounding Elbow Pond. Logging in roadless areas threatens water quality and floodwater retention, as well as habitat for interior forest species. No logging should ever occur in Inventoried Roadless Areas, period. These are among the wildest places left in New England and should be permanently protected.

You admit that the project is "Likely to Adversely Affect" the endangered Northern Long-eared Bat. This endangered bat can't afford to lose any more of its habitat, especially on public lands where logging is easily avoided.

The Lost River IRP fails to account for negative impacts on carbon and the climate, but claims that logging will benefit both climate mitigation and climate resilience. The Forest Service should revise its assessment to do an accurate analysis of climate and carbon impacts as required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

Your draft environmental analysis is brief, unsubstantiated, and conclusory. In numerous sections, the Forest Service leans on threadbare and incomplete reasoning - often with no citations to support their claims - that Lost River logging is necessary and would not have significant environmental impacts. In the hydrology section (p. 23), for example, the Forest Service concludes that the project would have no impacts on water "quality or

quantity" because it does not exceed blanket thresholds for the proportion of an entire watershed that is logged - while including no discussion of the slope of the logged lands or the increase in extreme precipitation due to climate change, both of which certainly impact the chance of negative effects to streams. The Forest Service considers no alternatives to their proposal beside a "no-action" alternative, which they cursorily discuss in half a page (p. 16). This discussion mostly amounts to an ominous claim that, without the proposed logging, "the landscape would trend toward a homogeneous even-aged structure and species mix," while providing no evidence to support this claim.

In summary, I am shocked and disheartened that so many of your recent projects are infiltrating such beautiful and natural habitats filled with established species that are thriving and humans are enjoying. It's almost like someone who is making these decisions never even visited a place like Tarleton or the back side of Mt Moosilauke - places that outdoors's people are recently finding as alternatives to the crowded places like Lafayette Ridge and Artists Bluff.