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First name: Matthew

Last name: DiBona

Organization: National Wild Turkey Federation

Title: District Biologist

Comments: On behalf of the Vermont State Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, please see attached letter of support for the Telephone Gap IRP.

Thanks, Matt DiBona

On behalf of the Vermont State Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF-VT), and our over 1,000 members in the Green Mountain State, we would like to express our support for the timber harvest and forest management actions proposed in the Telephone Gap Integrated Resource Project.

NWTF-VT strongly supports the activities proposed within the Project Area to promote young forest habitat, enhance oak habitat, and increase stand diversity and age classes. The application of even-aged and uneven-aged silvacultural techniques, as well as, forest stand improvement work across the proposed 11,801 acres will provide many benefits beyond timber products. Many species of wildlife that have experienced population declines associated with a decrease in available young forest will benefit from the habitat created and restored through these activities, including passerines, ruffed grouse and American woodcock. In addition, these activities will improve overall forest health and increase the growth and vigor of remaining stock. Ultimately, these improved forest conditions will yield long term benefits for carbon sequestration and storage and overall forest resiliency against the impacts and future uncertainty associated with climate change.

NWTF-VT appreciates the efforts of USDA Forest Service to manage the Green Mountain National Forest for multiple benefits and values, including clean water, forest products, recreational opportunities, and wildlife habitat. We look forward to continuing our long-term partnership and collaboration to advance conservation in Vermont.