

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 7/18/2025 4:00:00 AM

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Comments: July 18, 2025 James Innes, District Ranger White Mountain National Forest 33 Kancamagus Highway Conway, NH, 03818 603-447-5448 x 5102 james.innes@usda.gov Re: Webster Cliff Trail Relocation Draft Environmental Assessment and Preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact Dear Mr. Innes: On behalf of the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC), thank you for this opportunity to comment in support of the Webster Cliff Trail Relocation Draft Environmental Assessment and Preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact. Founded in 1876, the AMC fosters the protection, enjoyment, and understanding of the outdoors. We envision a world where our natural resources are healthy, loved, and always protected, and where the outdoors occupies a place of central importance in every person's life. Our more than 90,000 members, volunteers and supporters include over 10,000 members of our New Hampshire Chapter as well as thousands of others who visit our New Hampshire facilities and surrounding regions for recreational activities. As a long-standing partner of the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF) we have an interest in the ecological and recreational values of this region including a strong, sustainable recreational trails network. AMC supports the Webster Cliff Trail Relocation (coinciding with the Appalachian Trail) as proposed in the draft environmental assessment as a means of achieving a more sustainable trail alignment. Resource impacts from poorly aligned trails, high volumes of visitation, and erosion from more frequent and severe storms negatively impact the surrounding environment and lead to increased maintenance and rehabilitation costs. Existing trails within Wilderness Areas, or trails with proposed realignments that cross into Wilderness Areas, are subject to the same resource impacts and recreation related impacts as other trails on the White Mountain National Forest. When possible, AMC encourages trail realignment where development of more sustainable recreational trails protects the surrounding environment. The Preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact is appropriate for the Webster Cliff Trail Relocation with the completion of the environmental review on the less than one acre project area by pertinent specialists. Public comments were reviewed, and stakeholder outreach was conducted on all aspects of the project proposal. AMC believes a no action alternative is not viable due to existing and long-term resource and recreation impacts. Reroute alternatives suggested for the Appalachian Trail are not viable solutions for ensuring the world's longest hiking-only footpath at more than 2,190 miles in length, continues to provide opportunities for reconnecting with nature, with each other, or otherwise experiencing a simpler way of life. Thank you for the opportunity to present these comments on the Webster Cliff Trail Relocation Draft Environmental Assessment and Preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact. Sincerely, Chris Thayer Senior Director, External Affairs and Contracts cthayer@outdoors.org