



ROADLESS AREAS OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

WHAT WE'VE LOST AND WHAT WE STAND TO LOSE

A REPORT BY
AMERICAN LANDS ALLIANCE
FOREST WATCH

WHITE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST ROADLESS FACTS

Nearly 400,000 acres of inventoried roadless areas on New Hampshire's White Mountain National Forest are protected under the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. If the Roadless Rule is reversed by the Bush administration, 125,000 acres, or thirty-three percent of those areas would be opened to commercial logging and road-building under the existing management plan for the forest, developed in 1986. Another 75,000, or nineteen percent would be open to salvage logging and temporary road construction.

Forest	Roadless Acres	Open to Commercial Logging and Road Construction	Open to Salvage Logging and Temporary Road Construction	Percentage at Risk
White Mountain	383,400	125,000	75,000	52

Source: US Forest Service¹

There are already more than 536 miles of roads traversing the White Mountain National Forest. Of these roads, twenty-six percent are open only to logging trucks and other high clearance vehicles. Forty-four percent are closed to motorized vehicles. Only about 30 percent are open to passenger vehicles.

State	USFS Closed Roads	USFS High Clearance Only	USFS Open to Public Passenger Vehicles	USFS Total
New Hampshire	237.19	139.32	160.37	536.88
Percent	44.2	26	29.8	100

Source: US Forest Service²

Currently, the maintenance backlog for these existing roads is more than ten and a half million dollars.

	Deferred Maintenance		
State	Critical	Non-Critical	Total
New Hampshire	\$691,421	\$9,924,884	\$10,616,305

Source: US Forest Service³

Ninety-three percent of the more than eight thousand comments received by the Forest Service from the citizens of New Hampshire during the development of the Roadless Rule supported the complete protection of all roadless areas.

¹ Final Environmental Impact Statement - Appendix A Inventoried Roadless Area Acreage Categories Of NFS Lands Summarized By State, November 13, 2000

² Official road mileage according to the Forest Service system-wide fiscal year 2002 Road Accomplishment Report.

³ United States Department of Agriculture. Forest Service. 2003. *Fiscal year 2004 Forest Service Budget Justification*. (Washington, DC).

⁴ Dombeck, Mike, Chief, United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, An Opportunity; December 29, 1999

INTRODUCTION

Between 1992 and 1997, nearly sixteen million acres of forest, farms, and open space across the nation were converted to urban or other uses.³ As America's population centers continue to grow, the last wild places on our national forests become more and more valuable.

In 1998, the U.S. Forest Service responded to the nation's need and desire to protect its last wild forests by placing an 18-month moratorium on the construction of new roads in the last remaining unprotected and unroaded, or "roadless", forests on the national forest system. In 1999, the Forest Service began a rulemaking process to determine the future of these last remaining roadless areas. During that process, more than 600 public meetings and hearings were held throughout the country, and more than 1.6 million Americans sent comments to the Forest Service - more than five times more comments than had ever been received on any federal rulemaking in US history. More than ninety-five percent of those comments nationally, and ninety-three percent in New Hampshire, asked for the complete protection of all roadless areas.

IF THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION REVERSES THE ROADLESS AREA CONSERVATION RULE, 200,000 ACRES OF THE LAST REMAINING ROADLESS AREAS ON NEW HAMPSHIRE'S WHITE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FORESTS COULD BE OPENED TO LOGGING AND ROAD-BUILDING.

According to then Secretary of Agriculture, Dan Glickman, "Never before have the American people so actively participated in helping to decide how their public lands should be managed."⁴ In January of 2001, the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, which protects the remaining inventoried roadless areas on our national forests from most logging, road construction, drilling and mining, was signed into law.

But just as the Roadless Rule was scheduled to take effect, the Bush administration moved to block it. First, White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card froze its implementation. Then Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman temporarily postponed its effective date, and announced the Bush administration's intentions to amend the rule and reopen the public comment process. On December 23, 2003, while families across America gathered for the holiday season, the Bush administration removed the largest national forest in the country, the Tongass Rainforest of Alaska, from protection under the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. This was despite receiving nearly 250,000 public comments opposing the exemption. Since then, the administration has announced intentions to revise or remove protections from the roadless areas throughout the country, including New Hampshire.

Nearly 400,000 acres of roadless areas on the White Mountain National Forest are protected from logging and road-building under the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. If the Roadless Rule is reversed by the Bush administration, 125,000 acres, or thirty-three percent of those areas would be opened to commercial logging and road-building under the existing management plan for the forest. Another 75,000, or nineteen percent would be open to salvage logging and temporary road construction.

This report profiles some of the roadless areas that have been logged and/or roaded on the White Mountain National Forest prior to the enactment of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, and some of the roadless areas that could be logged or roaded if the Roadless Rule is reversed.

LOGGING AND ROAD CONSTRUCTION IN ROADLESS AREAS OF THE WHITE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST

In the Forest Service's 1979 nation-wide inventory of Roadless Areas on America's National Forest System, known as the second Roadless Area Review and Evaluation or "RARE II", the Forest Service classified 235,000 acres on the White

Mountain National Forest as roadless. The inventory identified 13 roadless areas; Wild River, Great Gulf Extension, Dartmouth Range, Cherry Mt., Presidential-Dry River, Pemigewasset, Kinsman Mt., Mt. Wolf-Gordon Pond, Jobilidunk, Carr Mt.-Waterville, Sandwich Range and Kearsarge. Two other roadless areas, Kilkenny and Caribou-Speckled Mt. were added to the inventory of roadless areas during the development of the 1986 forest plan for the White Mountain National Forest.

An updated roadless inventory, completed in January 2004, increased the total acreage of roadless lands on the forest to 383,400, plus 113,000 acres of congressionally designated wilderness.

While logging and road construction in the roadless areas of the White Mountain National Forest since the national inventory of roadless areas in 1979 have not been as devastating as in some western forests, ten of the fifteen roadless areas included in the 1986 forest plan inventory have had

some degree of logging since 1986, and four of them have had significant road construction since the 1986 forest plan went into effect.

Two of the areas, Cherry Mt. and Mt. Wolf-Gordon Pond, have since been developed to the point where the Forest Service considered dropping them from the most recent inventory of roadless areas on the forest. The Dartmouth Range Roadless Area has also seen considerable road construction, and along with the Kearsarge and Cherry Mountain Roadless Areas has seen the greatest impact from logging.

Absent the Roadless Rule, 125,000 acres of the remaining roadless areas on the White Mountain National Forest would be open to commercial logging and road



Clearcut Logging on the White Mountain National Forest
Photo by George Wuerthner

construction under the existing forest plan for the forest. Salvage logging and temporary road construction would be permitted on another 75,000 acres.

A recent research study by the Appalachian Mountain Club identified the Pemigewasset, Sandwich Range, Wild River, and Presidential-Dry River areas as four of the six largest roadless areas in northern New England.* Given existing levels of development, it is likely that the White Mountain National Forest, along with the Adirondack State Park, contains the greatest concentration of large roadless areas in the northeastern United States.

*See: <http://www.outdoors.org/research/mapping/mapping-roadless.shtml> for more information

Sources:

Appalachian Mountain Club White Mountain National Forest Management Plan revision comments – April 2003

“Mountain Treasures” – 1999 report from Appalachian Mountain Club, The Wilderness Society and Conservation Law Foundation

White Mountain National Forest Management Plan Revision Documents - 2003

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Log Landing on the White Mountain National Forest

Photo by Ned Therrien



Clearcut Logging on the White Mountain National Forest

Photo by Ned Therrien

DARTMOUTH RANGE ROADLESS AREA



The Dartmouth Range Roadless Area

Photo by Ned Therrien

**DARTMOUTH
RANGE
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The Dartmouth Range Roadless Area offers a degree of wildness and remoteness that is exceedingly rare in populous New England. In 1979, the Dartmouth Range Roadless Area was inventoried at 9,300 acres. In the updated inventory of January 2004, the Forest Service expanded this to 12,300 acres. The area is unique in the White Mountain National Forest in that its core is free not only of roads but also of maintained hiking trails. Abutting the Great Gulf and Presidential-Dry River Wilderness and roadless areas, the Dartmouth Range is considered a key addition to the wilderness core of the White Mountain National Forest.

Absent the protections afforded by Roadless Area Conservation Rule, nearly 9,700 acres, or about 80 percent of the area, would be opened to road-building and logging under the existing management plan for the White Mountain National Forest.

PEMIGEWASSET ROADLESS AREA



The Pemigewasset Roadless Area
Photo by Jerry and Marcy Monkman

At 91,900 acres, the Pemigewasset was the largest national forest roadless area in the northeastern United States in the Forest Service's 1979 roadless area inventory (RARE II). Congress protected 43,700 of those acres as the Pemigewasset Wilderness Area, the second largest wilderness area east of the Mississippi River.

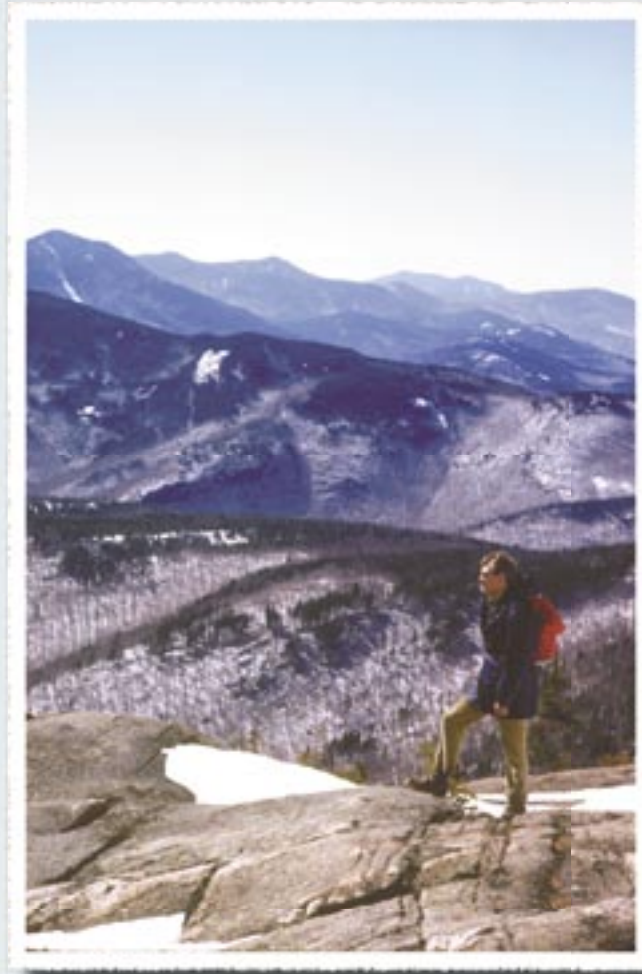
The Forest Service's updated January, 2004 inventory has enlarged the area to 106,000 acres. Absent the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, all but 5,000 acres of the land outside of the designated wilderness area would have no permanent protection, and 11,000 acres of the area would be opened to road-building and timber harvesting under the current management plan for the White Mountain National Forest.

The unprotected portions of the Pemigewasset Roadless Area contain more than 120 miles of hiking trails, including the Lincoln Trail, the Greenleaf Trail, and 20 miles of the Appalachian Trail. The area is also popular with cross country skiers and snowshoers.

Elevations in the roadless area range from just below 1,200 feet, along the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River, to over a mile high

THE
PEMIGEWASSET
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SANDWICH RANGE AND CHOCORUA ROADLESS AREAS



The Sandwich Range Roadless Area
Photo by Ned Therrien

SANDWICH RANGE AND CHOCORUA ROADLESS AREAS

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WHITE MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST

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NEW HAMPSHIRE

The contiguous Sandwich Range and Chocorua Roadless Areas have been inventoried by the Forest Service at 67,300 acres, but conservationists have mapped the roadless acreage at more than 75,000. Congress has designated 23,200 acres of the area as the Sandwich Wilderness. The rest of the area, which includes popular hiking, skiing and snowshoeing trails, rich songbird habitat, fragile sub-alpine mountain ridges, exposed ledges, roaring rivers, cascades, flumes and plunge pools, has been placed into a variety of “management designations” under the existing forest plan. Twelve percent, or 8,300 acres, are protected under Scenic Area, and Natural Research Area designation under the plan, but if the Roadless Area Conservation Rule is reversed, twenty-six percent, or eighteen thousand acres of the area would be open to commercial logging and road-building under the plan, and another nine percent, or six thousand acres, would be open to salvage logging and temporary road construction.

WILD RIVER ROADLESS AREA



The Wild River Roadless Area

Photo by Daniel Yetter

The Wild River Roadless Area received one of the highest ratings for wilderness attributes in the East when it was studied under RARE II, but has not yet received wilderness protection from Congress. The Wild River Roadless Area was originally mapped at 46,900 acres. The Forest Service has recently updated this to over 71,000 acres, which includes most of the watershed of the Wild River as well as surrounding lands. The interior valley of this area, surrounded by high peaks, offers rare, sheltered lowland habitat for many of the White Mountains rare and sensitive species.

Absent the Roadless Area Conservation Rule, none of the area would have permanent protection. If protections under the Roadless Rule were removed, 21,000 acres of the area would immediately be opened to road-building and timber harvesting under the current forest plan for the White Mountain National Forest.

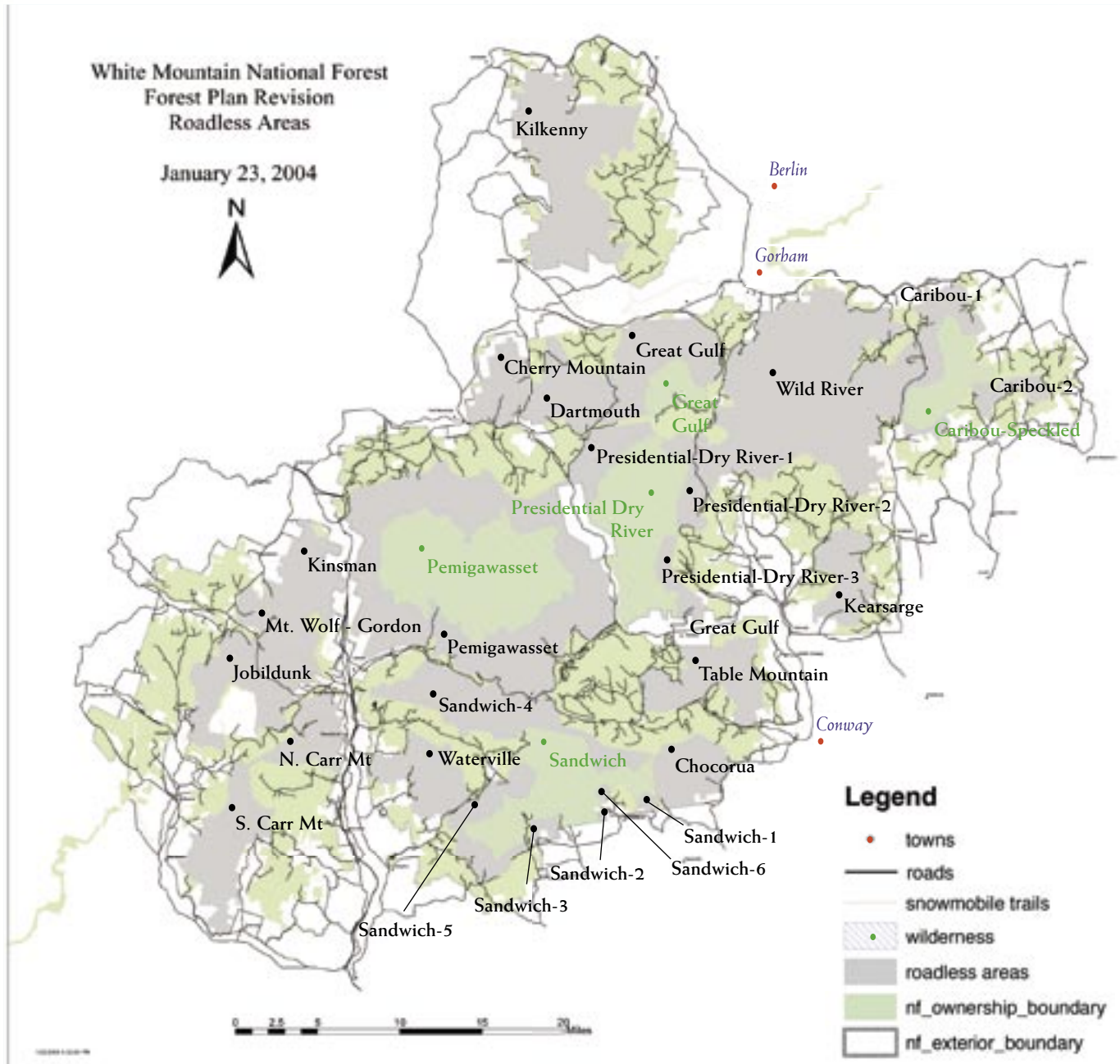
**WILD RIVER
ROADLESS
AREA**

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**NEW
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In the most recent inventory of roadless areas on the White Mountain National Forest, the total acreage of roadless lands on the forest was increased to 383,400, plus 113,000 acres of congressionally designated Wilderness.

Absent the Roadless Rule, 125,000 acres of those roadless areas would be open to commercial logging and road construction under the existing management plan for the forest. Salvage logging and temporary road construction would be permitted on another 75,000 acres.



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Forest Watch was founded in 1994 as Green Mountain Forest Watch and focused initially on improving management of the Green Mountain National Forest. In 1998, the name was changed to Forest Watch to communicate the organization's commitment to all forests all across New England.

Today, Forest Watch works to protect and restore forests— young and old, small and large, private and public. Our goals are to restore wilderness, protect imperiled wildlife, improve public land management, and promote ecological forestry. We are a non-profit, 501 (c) 3, conservation organization that uses research, education, advocacy, negotiation, and sometimes litigation. Our more than 6,500 members help to create a lasting forest legacy with their financial donations of time and financial support. Please join them.



American Lands
ALLIANCE

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American Lands' mission is to protect forest, grassland, and aquatic ecosystems; preserve biological diversity; restore landscape and watershed integrity; and promote environmental justice in connection with those goals. We accomplish these goals by strengthening grassroots conservation networks; providing strategic communications, advocacy and other assistance to local conservation groups; and by helping to improve communications among those groups and other segments of society.

Americans Lands provides grassroots activists with a national voice in Washington, DC, and advocates for strong national policies to protect and restore federal and non-federal forests, grasslands, and endangered wildlife.

In January of 2001, after thirty years of debate and the largest public participation process in US history, the Roadless Area Conservation Rule was signed into law. The Roadless Rule, as enacted, protects the last intact forests on America's National Forest System, their wildlife habitat, their clean air and water, their opportunities for recreation and their unspoiled open spaces for current and future generations of Americans.

But now the Bush administration is threatening to unravel the rule, opening these last wild forests once more to road construction and logging.

Nearly 400,000 acres of inventoried roadless areas on New Hampshire's White Mountain National Forest are protected under the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. If the Roadless Rule is reversed by the Bush administration, 125,000 acres, or thirty-three percent of those areas would be opened to commercial logging and road-building under the existing forest plan for the forest, developed in 1986. Another 75,000, or nineteen percent would be open to salvage logging and temporary road construction.

Please, contact Dale Bosworth, Chief of the US Forest Service and ask him to keep the Roadless Area Conservation Rule intact, and to protect America's last wild forests. Forever.

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Contact the American Lands Alliance or Forest Watch for more information about New England's wildest remaining forests, and to learn how you can help protect them, for wild nature, and for future generations.

An on-line letter calling for roadless area protection is ready for you to modify and send at:

www.forestwatch.org

Add your thoughts and name to the letter, then click "Send." The U.S. Forest Service needs to hear from us - again. A few minutes of your time could help protect these wild places forever.

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