

Lake Tarleton - A Spectacular Treasure Threatened by Proposed Logging

Imagine dipping your canoe paddle into the clear, cold waters of a quiet mountain lake, surrounded by mostly undisturbed forests sloping to the shoreline, loons calling through the mist, and the alpine-topped Mt. Moosilauke looming in the distance. You land your canoe to hike a narrow trail that follows the rocky, undeveloped shoreline, surrounded by massive Hemlocks, stately White Pines, and a variety of hardwoods. Songbirds call from the branches, and a Bald Eagle soars overhead.

This is what you can experience today on Lake Tarleton in Piermont and Warren. Thousands of visitors each year come to the lake to boat, fish, swim, hike, camp, ski, snowshoe and birdwatch in this spectacular natural environment--a true gem of the White Mountains and the largest lake in the White Mountain National Forest.

This could all CHANGE in Spring of 2022.

The US Forest Service is proposing a timber harvest on nearly 900 acres of land along the undeveloped northeastern shore of Lake Tarleton. The plan will significantly alter the current remote and undeveloped character of Lake Tarleton for decades.

History: In 1994, developers proposed a massive resort surrounding the entire lake. The development proposal inspired a multi-year conservation effort to preserve Lake Tarleton and the surrounding landscape in its natural state. A dozen organizations, 600 individuals and businesses, the State of New Hampshire and the US Congress worked in partnership to raise \$7.5 million to purchase 5,300 acres around the lake, securing public ownership forever as part of the nearly one-million-acre White Mountain National Forest.

Conservation partners gathered to celebrate the protection effort in August 2000. *"Many of us here today have worked hard for a number of years to reach the point we are at today where we can proudly say that this pristine New Hampshire wilderness has been saved,"* said U.S. Senator Judd Gregg. *"We are delighted to be celebrating the protection of this magnificent property,"* said David Houghton of the Trust for Public Land. *"Lake Tarleton and its nearby lakes and forestland are a crucial piece of the Upper Valley landscape, so while this project has national significance, it is also very important at the local level,"* said Jeanie McIntyre of the Upper Valley Land Trust.

So, what is so special about Lake Tarleton?

At 1,300 feet of elevation and 334 acres, Lake Tarleton is one of the largest mountain lakes in the state. The mostly undeveloped shoreline has only three permanent residences, several small seasonal cottages, and one summer boy's camp. A public boat launch and sandy beach provide ample public access. A narrow hiking trail snakes along the undeveloped shoreline, winding through undisturbed woods past several primitive campsites. Numerous small streams, running through unbroken forest, feed the lake with clean, clear water.

The lake is home to nesting loons, bald eagles, osprey, and rainbow, brown and lake trout. Dozens of bird species nest in the surrounding forest each summer. Barred Owls, Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkeys, Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers live here year-round. Deer, bear, moose, bobcat, mink, otter and other mammals use the forest and waters for food and shelter.

Once again, Lake Tarleton is at risk. The White Mountain National Forest is proposing to log 880 acres along the shoreline and on the slopes above Lake Tarleton and its associated wetlands. The final approval may come as early as Spring of 2022. If the project goes forward, the wild, undeveloped and special character of the lake will be impacted for years to come.

Here are some of the impacts:

The unparalleled scenic character of Lake Tarleton would change. No matter how carefully planned, timber harvest will dramatically change the aesthetics of the forests surrounding the lake. Logging activity will occur as close as 100 feet from the shoreline, and there will be clear-cuts ranging from 10 to 30 acres. Because the land abutting the lake slopes upward, the spectacular vista surrounding the lake will be spoiled.

Logging could introduce invasive species. Few if any invasive species are found around the lake or in the water. Logging operations typically open forested areas to invasive plants. The Forest Service has proposed controlling these newly emerging invasive species with herbicides.

Lake Tarleton's water quality is threatened. Most of the timber operations will occur within the immediate watershed of the lake, which is fed by numerous small streams. The project could result in erosion and run-off from exposed soils, pollution from machinery, and residual herbicides used on invasive species—all leading to degradation of Lake Tarleton's pristine waters.

The project will have long-term impacts. [To quote a 2021 Forest Service report about the proposal](#), "The temporal scope for indirect effects is on the order of several decades to centuries because that is how long it can take for forested stands to provide similar habitat structure post-harvest compared to pre-harvest."

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Speak up! WRITE to the White Mountain National Forest and voice your opposition. A **FINAL 30-DAY COMMENT PERIOD** will open early March and this is a critical place to voice your opposition!

Tell your neighbors! There is strength in numbers. If the Forest Service and NH delegation hear from enough people, there will be even more reasons to **stop this project**.

Sign our petition [HERE](#)

Contact Senator Shaheen and Representative Kuster. Tell them your concerns. Ask them to encourage the Forest Service to **stop this project**.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the proposed plan. Click [HERE](#) for a detailed environmental review.

The White Mountain National Forest is expected to allow on additional 30-day comment period. A final decision is expected in Spring 2022, and if approved, the project will be implemented over the next 5-10 years!

THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW -- LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD.

Send your comments to:

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