



P.O. Box 9175, Missoula, MT 59807 • (P) 406.542.2048 • wild@wildernesswatch.org • www.wildernesswatch.org

Board of Directors

Gary Macfarlane, ID
President

Franz Camenzind, WY
Vice-President

Jerome Walker, MT
Secretary/Treasurer

Marty Almquist, MT

Janine Blaeloch, WA

Talasi Brooks, ID

Fran Mauer, AK

Cyndi Tuell, AZ

Senior Advisor

Stewart M. Brandborg

Executive Director

George Nickas

Advisory Council

Magalen Bryant
Dr. Derek Craighead
Dr. M. Rupert Cutler
Dr. Roderick Nash

Minneapolis, MN Office

2833 43rd Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55406
(P) 612.201.9266

Moscow, ID Office

P.O. Box 9623
Moscow, ID 83843
(P) 208.310.7003

August 30, 2017

Brooke M. Brown, District Ranger
Pemigewasset Ranger District
White Mountain National Forest
71 White Mountain Drive
Campton, NH 03223

Re: Thoreau Falls Trail Bridge Removal Project

Sent via: comments-eastern-white-mountain-pemigewasset@fs.fed.us

Dear District Ranger Brown,

The following comments on the Pemigewasset Wilderness Thoreau Falls Trail Bridge Removal Project Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) come from Wilderness Watch. Wilderness Watch is a national wilderness conservation organization focused on the protection of all Wildernesses in the National Wilderness Preservation System, including the Pemigewasset Wilderness. Our organization previously commented on this project two years ago.

From reading the Draft EA, we understand that the Proposed Action (Alternative 1) calls for the removal of the bridge without replacement. This alternative would use traditional tools to remove the bridge, but would allow mechanized and motorized equipment (including chainsaws and helicopters) to be used for removal of large material. Up to two helicopter trips might be necessary to remove this large material from the Wilderness.

In general, Wilderness Watch supports the Proposed Action, Alternative 1. But we strongly urge the Forest Service to refrain from using chainsaws and helicopters if at all possible.

Earlier, the Forest Service removed a different bridge (a suspension bridge) from the East Branch of the Pemigewasset Wilderness using all nonmotorized means. Wilderness Watch supported that project. We urge the Forest Service to continue that tradition of removal of installations and structures inside the Wilderness with the Thoreau Falls bridge removal as well, and to do so without motorized tools or transportation. Doing this project in this manner will be good for Wilderness.

Overall, we believe that this project will enhance the wilderness character of the Pemigewasset Wilderness, and if conducted using nonmotorized means, will

further enhance the wilderness character of the Pemigewasset Wilderness. We believe that this project is in keeping with the 1964 Wilderness Act and the 1984 New Hampshire Wilderness Act.

Please keep Wilderness Watch on your contact list for further actions with this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Kevin Proescholdt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'K' and 'P'.

Kevin Proescholdt
Conservation Director
kevinp@wildernesswatch.org