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draft letter forest management

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To: "mass-conservation-alliance@googlegroups.com" <mass-conservation-alliance@googlegroups.com>

The Massachusetts Conservation Alliance opposes a blanket moratorium on commercial logging on state-owned forests. Forest management on state lands in Massachusetts is a highly regulated activity based on science and tailored to site-specific conditions. Forest management is needed to protect water quality, create diversity of forest types and promote a diversity of wildlife habitats.

Our membership is concerned that a blanket moratorium on commercial logging will interrupt important ongoing management efforts on state lands. We cite as an example the Department of Conservation and Recreation's management of red pines. These trees were planted during the Great Depression and many have been destroyed by disease. These dead and dying trees provide little to no carbon sequestration benefits and their removal makes room for younger, healthier trees which will remove carbon for generations. A side benefit is the creation of a healthier habitat for local wildlife. We trust the professional foresters and wildlife scientists within Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Department of Fish and Game to review the facts of each project and make decisions based on the merits and site specific conditions.

We believe there will be unintended consequences of a blanket moratorium. At a minimum a moratorium will delay important projects that have been reviewed and approved based on careful analysis by professional managers. We urge you to work within existing executive branch approval processes to improve the management of our forest resources. Incremental improvement of project management does not incur negative consequences and interruptions.

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