

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 15, 2025

The Honorable Brooke Rollins  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Rollins:

We write regarding the U.S. Forest Service's process to rescind the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule (0596-AD66) that covers nearly 45 million acres of our national forests. We are concerned about the short timeline that you have outlined, with just 21 days for the initial public comment period. We urge you to provide greater opportunity for those who care about our national forests to have meaningful involvement, including by holding public meetings in New Hampshire.

Granite Staters have a long history of working toward sustainable timber harvesting and conservation of large landscapes. Forests cover 82% of the land in New Hampshire, making it the second most forested state in the nation. The White Mountain National Forest has exemplified balanced, multiple use management since before the Roadless Rule was proposed, and that has continued since its enactment thanks to the guidance of a Forest Management Plan crafted with substantial public input from a broad range of stakeholders. Similarly, the largest tract of private forestland in New Hampshire has been managed under a conservation easement for more than 20 years, ensuring that the landscape continues as a largely undeveloped, productive working forest that provides public access for recreation and conserves ecologically sensitive areas.

The White Mountain National Forest encompasses 17% of the forested land in New Hampshire, offering key timber resources, world-class outdoor recreation, invaluable watershed protection and robust wildlife habitat. The 265,000 acres of inventoried roadless areas within the White Mountain National Forest include designated wilderness and other treasured landscapes for hiking, backcountry skiing, fishing and all of the outdoor activities that make New Hampshire so special. The \$3.9 billion outdoor recreation economy, the \$1.4 billion forest products industry and the incalculable benefits of wildlife habitat and watershed health all depend upon sound management of the national forest. With opportunities for sustainable timber harvesting and protection for unfragmented forest landscapes, these values can and do coexist.

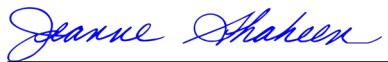
Our national forests belong to all Americans, and many New Hampshire residents enjoy hiking, hunting, fishing, skiing and other activities on national forests in other states. We have heard from hundreds of constituents expressing their care and concern for the White Mountain National Forest, and we want to ensure their voices are counted in a meaningful way.

Finally, we note that the health of our forests and the ability to manage for timber, recreation, water quality and wildlife depend on people to do the work. With more than 4,000 U.S. Forest Service staff accepting deferred resignations, an unspecified number of improper firings and a

disruptive reorganization plan expected to push out additional employees, we worry about the Forest Service's ability to meet its statutory obligation to manage our national forests for multiple use and sustained yield to benefit current and future generations. Accordingly, we urge you to restore Forest Service staffing to appropriate levels and take steps to appropriately engage with the public on rulemaking regarding the Roadless Area Conservation Rule.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,




Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan  
United States Senator



Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress



Maggie Goodlander  
Member of Congress