

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/30/2022 4:00:00 AM

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Comments: Attached please find an expert report written by world-renowned forest scientist Dr. Dominick DellaSala concerning the Black Ram logging project in the Kootenai National Forest.

Dr. DellaSala recently conducted a field visit to Unit 72 within the Black Ram project area that we initially helped to coordinate. His findings confirm, despite the USFS's claims to the contrary, that Unit 72 is a uniquely important old-growth forest ecosystem that we cannot afford to lose. Dr. DellaSala concludes, "I can say unequivocally that this site is old growth, is critically important to its surroundings, has key climate and refugia properties, including the potential for large amounts of above and below ground carbon to continue to accumulate over centuries."

Additionally, Dr. DellaSala writes, in response to the USFS's stated justifications for the Black Ram project: "The agency claims this is for climate resilience, while my observations show it would have the opposite effect." The Black Ram project must be halted immediately - and a moratorium should be issued on all mature and old-growth logging while the definition of old-growth is being clarified and the comprehensive forest inventory established under this executive order is completed.

Terry Tempest Williams says, "The eyes of the future are looking back at us and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time. They are kneeling with hands clasped that we might act with restraint, that we might leave room for the life that is destined to come. To protect what is wild is to protect what is gentle. Perhaps the wilderness we fear is the pause between our own heartbeats, the silent space that says we live only by grace. Wilderness lives by this same grace. Wild mercy is in our hands."

Thank you for putting an immediate stop to the Black Ram logging project - and amending the definition of old-growth to include forests like the one-of-a-kind parcel found in Unit 72 (described in detail in the attached report) - the most incredible forest we have ever walked through, for the benefit of future generations.

ATTACHMENT: Black Ram Project - Dr. DellaSala's official findings