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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Old growth forests offer a unique landscape which is quite literally, a once in a lifetime experience. Outside of the scientific benefits, I'd like to share some personal thoughts.

I spend as much time doing outdoor activities with my kids (12 and 10) as I can. My wife and I both work day jobs, run around with sports, are busy all the time. When we are able to get away our favorite places are in the Hoosier National Forest - specifically those with the largest and most mature trees. We hike frequently in and around Springs Valley Trail and also through a 500 acre plot adjacent to 92 acres we own that is slated for clear cutting in the Buffalo Springs Restoration project. Between pine thickets are stands of 100 year old trees, they're magical. Some of these massive trees age and die, and are replaced by young ambitious ones. Many however seem to grow stronger, large oak trees and hickory trees. Should stands containing trees of this age and size be logged, the children of today will have fewer opportunities to access and see the beauty.

Traveling to the national forests on the west coast is a surreal experience, one I'm fortunate to have done a few times in my life. The old growth (or approaching old growth) trees in Southern Indiana are the next closest thing. Please protect these forests for the future generations of kids, so they can witness trees so large several of them can't wrap their arms around them.

Instead of mentioning the facts about Carbon Storage, Endangered Species, Public Opinion - I felt it more appropriate to share a more personal message. The attached picture is of Senator Mike Braun and I, in the HNF, looking at the Sheep Skin Deed I have from my 8th generation grandparents to our property from 1811, 5 years before Indiana was a state and the oldest same family owned farm in Indiana. To say I have a history is an understatement. I was a young boy when my great grandfather logged virgin timber on our property and it has never been the same. I hate my kids didn't get to see that. Please don't do the same to the public forests.

ATTACHMENT: Robbie and Senator Braun with deed.jpeg - two people standing on grass, one holding a framed document