

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/10/2020 10:40:15 PM

First name: David

Last name: DePrez

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Selling timber is what the forest service does. I get that. Once a forestry major at Oregon State University, I was taught that is indeed what you do as professional foresters. Forest management prioritizes industrial logging in the same mindset that engineering prioritizes industrial building. It's bred in the bone as a natural consequence of western civilization. This is an appeal that you back out of this standard mindset in the specific case of yet another 5000 acres of ancient forest in the Tongas.

The Tongas is the end of the road for ancient forest in the new world. It's time to stop this taking of the first fruits of this last stand in the usual business of western thinking that doesn't know or care what it is until it's gone, commoditized unsustainably into temporarily useful wooden implements with planned obsolescence. Please STOP targeting the Tongas old growth with the usual attitudes of a conquering, subduing, colonizing force, rounding up the indigenous citizens who are impounded and out of the way, and then stealing the treasure until there's nothing left.

I took my education in plant science and instead, for thirty years, taught high school science students environmental systems science with an emphasis on climate change. It is thus no accident that young people like Greta Thunberg are leading the public outcry regarding the impacts of rising temperature. They come prepared with a scientific literacy that includes an understanding of how interconnected are the world's natural life-support systems such as the Tongas that are balanced by means of negative feedback. Now unbalanced, the feedback is turning positive. For instance, heat means more forest fires, which dries out more trees, which burn more easily, which releases more carbon, which pushes global temperatures higher, which melts more ice, which exposes more of the unreflective earth to sunlight, which warms the poles, which lowers the temperature gradient with the equator, which slows ocean currents and weather systems, which results in more extreme storms and longer droughts. It is also now clear that positive climate feedbacks are not limited to physics, but stretch to economics, politics and psychology. The last of the world's rainforests, including the Tongas, is turning into wastelands because the loss of forest is weakening rainfall, which makes harvests lower, which gives farmers an economic motivation to clear more land to make up for lost production, which means more fires and less rain. Fluid circulations that were locked into regular forms have started to "wobble," like a toy top does as it slows. The result, for example, includes cold air spilling south in polar vortexes and disruptions of the normal patterns of deep-water currents distributing heat from hot to cold.

You have the chance to think outside your forestry training regarding ever more timber sales in the ancient forest. You are better than the corporate cutters who razed their private lands and sent the logs to Japan to fetch a better price, and now stand in line to persuade you to sell off my public property with the same mentality. You know they don't care that these sales fetch them profit while us taxpayers foot the bill for road building costs and other overhead that turn sales into net losses. You were taught the importance of other parts of your job description, wildlife management of habitat that avoids fragmentation, providing wildlife corridors for safe travel, watershed conservation, especially regarding soil, stewardship of the people's trust well into the future, and safeguarding the ancient ways of indigenous cultures.

So I implore you: DON'T CUT DOWN THOSE TREES! PLEASE! Instead manage your second growth and leave the ancient ROADLESS forest alone.

Thank you for reading this.

