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First name: Alexander

Last name: Graeff

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Good, well-intentioned executive order with important recognition of the value of old-growth forests.

I support the definition, designation, recognition, and preservation of old-growth, high quality forests.

Something I would like to see is a regional assessment of old growth characteristics based on forest type -

including time since last harvest, presence/absence of non-native species, presence/absence of natural

processes, threats to continuity, and a shift away from focusing on "rare species" and rather a shift to a broader

recognition of the value of old-growth, natural forest systems that doesn't emphasize the presence of particular

species.

I think we should take a serious look at the proportion of young, early-successional forests compared to high-

quality old forests, the proportion of forests that are managed for timber compared to the proportion of forests

managed/conserved/preserved for intrinsic value, and hopefully recognize that there is an unhealthy balance.

We should aim for a much higher proportion of forests that are designated old-growth, high-quality, and are not

managed for resource extraction.

The health of our planet, our water, our native plant and animal communities, and our people depends on the

presence of these important systems, and already we've lost too many.

Forests that are designated old-growth should remain relatively unmanaged where possible, allow natural

processes to dominate, and once designated, should remain designated.

Old-growth forests, really, should be treated as "preserves". They should be recognized as high-quality, long-

lasting systems that have been in development for decades, if not centuries, and that cannot be "cycled" through

harvest.

Personally, my mental health depends on these places, and my happiness and confidence in our society and

governments are fully related to how well we do or don't recognize and protect our important natural resources

for their intrinsic value, not just their monetary value. Living in a forested region and being an ecologist, I am

sensitive to the vast exploitation of timber as a resource at the expense of natural communities that have been in

development decades or centuries that in the face of climate change, disturbance, and invasive species have no

chance persisting or adapting.

It is, I believe, the responsibility of government agencies to protect these resources. There are myriad private

entities raping the land of its "resources" for monetary benefit without regard for the health of the resource or the

people. And as such, the government must be the body that recognizes, preserves, and protects old-growth,

high-quality forests.