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Comments: May the USDA consider the findings in this article, published just 4 days ago, about the long-term effects of logging old growth forest has on our environment.

"Canada's Logging Industry Devours Forests Crucial to Fighting Climate Change"

Under Canada's forestry standards, logging companies can clear vast areas of all trees and vegetation and are required to replant the land or demonstrate that the forest will naturally regenerate. But, scientists say, without the thick bark of older trees, younger trees are more vulnerable to wildfire, and logging companies typically replant species more suitable for the timber industry rather than those resistant to fire.

The Canadian government claims to have managed the forest according to the principles of sustainable forest management," said Brendan Mackey, the study's lead author and a professor and director of a climate research group at Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia. "But its notion of sustainability is really tied to maintaining and maximizing wood production and ensuring the regeneration of commercially desirable trees. That has a lot of implications for biodiversity."

Peter Wood, a lecturer on forest resources management at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, who was not involved in the study, called its findings "shocking," adding that they highlight "what is at stake as we focus our logging on some of these older and more intact areas."

The enormous and ecologically vital boreal forest extends through North America, northern Europe and Siberia, but the largest portion is in Canada.

Beyond being an important natural habitat for many animals and plants, the boreal forest locks up huge amounts of climate-warming carbon dioxide. The world's boreal forests are estimated to collectively hold 703 gigatons of carbon in trees and soil. The world's tropical forests, by comparison, store about 375 gigatons of carbon.

Thank you,

Mary Madore