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Comments: From 1991-1995 I was chair of the Conservation Committee of the Seattle Mountaineers. In my role as chair I helped to formulate the Mountaineers' position on the federal Roadless Rule which has since been used to protect millions of acres of old growth forests. Given that experience, and my knowledge of the roles that old growth forests play in minimizing global warming and protecting many endangered wildlife species, I strongly support permanent protection of this nation's remaining old growth forests, especially in the West and Alaska. There is no longer any excuse for doing what the Canadian government is still doing in British Columbia: clear-cutting huge swaths of 600 year old trees on Vancouver Island that is destroying what had been a major, intact ecosystem in the Pacific Northwest.

I urge the United States Forest Service to adopt the most sweeping protections possible for our remaining old growth forests.

Thank you,

Michael Shurgot ,PhD