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Comments: As someone who has spent my entire career in the forest products industry and also Appalachian Mountains, I wish to express my disdain and disappointment in the hands-off forest management that has been taking place for over 23 years in our National Forests. I have witnessed firsthand the loss of our fowl, including Quail, Pheasant, and other flying habitat that once graced our beautiful forests.

I have witnessed the loss of many other species that have been driven out of our forest because we ceased sustainable forestry practices. Our forest no longer has adequate ground cover for our animal species. Actually, most all harvesting was halted many years ago. Now we see invasive species and plants not native to our hardwood forests.

This is a direct result of using non-science-based agendas governing our forests. We now have an over matured forest with oaks dying of old age and being replaced by maples and sassafras timber. Oaks provide forage and nuts for our habitat, but this is being lost at an alarming rate because of mortality of our oaks. The forests are renewable and should allow harvesting to help preserve them.

Forest have been manipulated for thousands of years and because of this; we had a very healthy forest 20 years ago. Now we have a forest with loss of species, massive forest fires, and deadly diseases.

Our young active growing forest are the answer to our climate change by sequestering carbon. In fact, 1/3rd of carbon has been proven to be stored in our forests. A study commissioned by Princeton University in 1998 proved that 1/3rd of all carbon was being sequestered in the eastern deciduous young active harvested forest of the United States. No other country can claim this process, but yet it is lost upon our governing bodies who wish to spend billions of dollars developing techniques of carbon sequestration and or new forms of energy that have a larger carbon footprint in totality.

Allowing mature timber to fall and rot is a travesty. And these dead trees are releasing more carbon directly as a result of this. We need multiple shelters of growth to promote a healthy forest.

As I stated, I have lived my entire life in the woods harvesting timber and providing hundreds of jobs. I am an environmentalist. In fact, my livelihood requires that. Our government has allowed our Us Forest Service to go array and create a monumental problem. Our oak forest is changing at an alarming rate. Unless they are directed to do what the National Forest Charters instructed; we will and are witnessing the loss of a national treasure.

I would testify before congress with accurate and science-based information that no one could factually argue against. Please change the method and processes of how our National Forests are managed!

If we do not act quickly, our current oak forests will disappear quickly and be replaced by species that do not belong.

The co-founder of Greenpeace Patrick Moore realized his mistakes in his early attempts of protecting our forests. Now he is one of the most notable advocates of sustainable forestry and has written several books on this subject.

Please take the bureaucrats out of this most important endeavor of saving our forests by placing true experts in all the positions of forest management before it is too late. Even now if we reverse the poor sighted agendas; our

forests will take a full generation to heal. And that healing is dependent upon sustainable harvesting techniques. Our National Forest were established to guarantee future reserves of timber. However, that is no longer in the thought process of forest management.

Now is the time to act appropriately. Will you do this, or will you allow misguided agendas destroy our old growth hardwood forests?

I implore you to call on real life experts that have co-existed and harvested our great forests to come to Congress and the US Forest Service Agency to re-align their disastrous plans. Some of the brightest minds are average people without PHD's but have practiced what our forefathers taught us.

Respectfully,  
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