

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/2/2024 11:03:45 PM

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Comments: I'm a scientist and in the time I have to comment I'm at a loss to express how important this is. We cannot afford wrong turns.

Public forests need the highest level of protection, oversight, and interdisciplinary expertise and collaboration. No conflicts of interest. This is critical for climate, ecology, and health - a polycrisis that needs holistic and common solutions. Natural forests are the most powerful solution.

We need bold leadership to change business as usual and first do no harm. Even in the most densely populated areas, and in environmental justice communities, public money is being spent cutting down old forests. It is causing grief, spreading invasives and creating more tick habitat. Please, take a pause. Allow real and open scientific conversations. And have the humility to admit the side effects of forest management. Any other path forward is an abuse of the public trust.

We need to be really careful about what we are doing where and why.

As a special treat, if someone actually does read this comment, here is a link to a film on the recovery of old growth in New England. It features little-known features and highlights the wisdom and power of forest ecosystems in stabilizing the climate. This is far beyond carbon, and should be front and center in forest policy.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVx45KG-DQs>