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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Old growth forest comments

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1-Ocean connections.

The earth's system is one of interdependent parts that connect and function together in a balanced environment. The watershed, water quality, water quantity and chemical make up of head water streams and rivers is dictated by the old growth forests and organic composition of the soil. The old growth forest provide the environment and the runs of various salmon need that to spawn and in return the salmon replenish the old growth forest with the resources the salmon bring back from the sea.

2- Biodiversity.

The old growth forest provides a great diversity of habitat which in turn provide for the reproduction, mating, food procurement, migration and seasonal use for these species of animals. In turn the animals provide for the dispersion, fertilization and reproduction of a healthy forest.

3-Watershed.

Without these old growth forests the water from the smallest rivulet to the largest river would run dry after the rainy season or snow season has past. They are the natural water storage areas of our forest they produce, retain, purify and provide water for all the downstream needs, both natural and humans needs.

4-Carbon Storage.

I have to repeat, The earth's system is one of interdependent parts that connect and function together in a balanced environment. This is so true with the carbon cycle that keeps our climate intact. The old growth forest may not absorb as much as new growth but the storage of carbon is critical to keep the carbon out of the atmosphere. That carbon is eventually returned to the soil and provides for new growth that takes carbon out of the atmosphere.

5-Multiple age old growth stages.

Old growth is wrongly characterized as mature old growth of certain age depending on the specie. When developing the old growth policies the Forest Service has to manage for all stages of old growth. From the fragile seedlings, through the intermediate young trees and the middle age trees. Without protecting these old growth intermediary states there wold be no final stage old growth.

6-Wildlife habitat.

As mentioned in my Biodiversity and Multiple age old growth stages section, all stages of old growth must be protected and managed to provide the diversity of habitat so that the wildlife can reproduce, migrate seasonally, adjust to a changing climate, find food and resources as needed.

7-Microbial fungus connection.

For too long forests have been wrongly managed for wood product production turning them into mono crop tree farms similar to our failing corporate farming industry. The underground health of our forests, regardless if the tree is for a commercial product or noncommercial, must be considered when managing old growth forest. Different species, old growth species and non commercial trees are all connected by microbial network that nurses, supports and protects all species. This is especially true with older trees which are the "Mother trees" for the future of the surrounding trees and environment.

8-Climate change.

This the 800 pound gorillas in the forest and in the world today. Many of these old growth forest have seen dramatic climate changes in their life time and survived. If we are to retain our forests. the DNA of our old growth forests are needed to assist us through our present climate changes. They cool the atmosphere, they absorb the carbon, they catch the moisture in these dry times, they provide for water as we enter drought period of desertification.

9-Economics.

The old growth forest and the seedling forest on their way to becoming old growth sanctuary are far more beneficial if they are left alone. Unlike cutting and harvesting trees for a single use product that will not last long, the retention of forests and old growth keeps on giving and helping our economies and communities by leaving them in place. Most extraction communities are making the transition to a visitor, education, learning based economy that is sustainable.

10-Peace and tranquility.

It has been proven scientifically that we need to retreat into nature, from where we have come centuries ago, to be absorbed by the power, the energy and the calmness of the natural environment. Today's world has totally changed who we are and stressed out us to the point where we need a refuge to find peace and our center. The old growth forest is like a cathedral or a place of sanctuary when we enter it every time. We need that now in these time of division, misunderstanding and confusion more than ever.

11-Management.

Two points. First management varies depending on what resource you are managing. Old growth forest is not something you manage in the typical Forest Service manner. You manage Old growth forest by leaving it alone, that is how it became old growth. The same for seedling old growth other wise it will never become old growth. Second, to make old growth management optional for each region or district is like making stopping at red light optional. To achieve a true old growth policy it make be forest wide for all the different types of old growth.

12-Fires.

The old growth we have is because it is fire resistant over many climatic changes similar to our present drought and hot climate. So, you want the Old growth to remain as a protection from fire and you want it to reproduce fire resistant trees to reduce fire. Research has shown that if you have a high quality defensible space and structure you have a 90% chance of surviving a fire even under the new climate changes. If your property is a mile from the nearest forest and you have a hardy defensible space you are most likely to survive. How many Old growth forest are that close to most towns and cities? How about remote cabins? A hardy defensible space will do the trick based on the latest research. It may not be esthetic and as pleasing to some owners but it is not the

responsibility of the National Forest to support poor and dangerous location in the forests.

13-Alaska.

Leaving out Alaska makes no sense. It is the largest intact temperate forest in the world and makes up most of our old growth forest in its mature stage in the United States

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