

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/11/2024 4:00:00 AM

First name: Beverly

Last name: Nichols

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Mature and old-growth forests in the Black Ram project in the Yaak and other areas of the country are being targeted and logged despite scientific evidence demonstrating that old-growth forests are more resilient to wildfires when left untouched. The draft plan lacks adequate protection for old-growth forests, and it overlooks mature forests, which are forests poised to become old-growth in the coming decades. The ancient inland rainforest at Black Ram in the Yaak is not considered old-growth by the U.S. Forest Service, which is racing to log old and mature forests on public lands before they can be protected!

Old-growth forests are not just majestic landscapes; they are essential habitats for a diverse range of plant and animal species, including our imperiled Yaak population of grizzly bears.

The rich biodiversity of old-growth forests is a cornerstone for ecological resilience in a changing climate. Moreover, old-growth forests excel at absorbing and storing carbon dioxide, playing a crucial role in addressing climate change.

Please help to protect these resources. This current proposal must be dramatically strengthened to prevent the logging of mature and old-growth forests, and the ancient primary forest at Black Ram, in the Kootenai National Forest, should be protected as a Climate Refuge. Forest defense is climate defense.