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Organization:

Title:

Comments: For the dire need to protect the Old Growth Forests on National Forest land, I am requesting that you use Option #3 which will assure little to no commercial cutting of Old Growth.

I am a long standing member of the Charlottesville Area Tree Stewards in Virginia. Our organization volunteers countless hours toward education about trees, their benefits, and how to plant and care for them. We have a tree nursery and at our biannual sale, have people lined up around the block to acquire the trees. American citizens realize both the climate and biodiversity benefits of trees, especially those of Old Growth forests. And yet, there is the threat of what Old Growth we have left could be subject to massive clear cutting.

The ugly scar of clear cutting is devastating to the environment and also to those people who live near those forests. How can the Forest Service even consider clear cutting areas where the soil will then rush down the mountainsides into the streams, threatening water supplies, and causing flooding? When can it be about the many benefits of maintaining beautiful Old Growth forests rather than the profits of the board wood?

Years ago, I remember driving by the U.S. Forest Service in Washington, D.C. and commenting about it to my son. With a serious look on his face, my son informed me that my naive perspective was misguided. The Forest Service doesn't necessarily do everything to protect our treasured federal lands from logging. I was shocked and sickened!

The U.S. Forest Service has the responsibility to protect these precious Old Growth forests so that they can continue to sustain our lives for the air we breathe, the water we drink, as a habitat for plants and animals, and for our general wellbeing.

Must I shudder when I drive by the U.S Forest Service in Washington or feel proud that they are doing everything they can to protect our Old Growth forests? Option #3 isn't perfect, but it is the best choice we have.