

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/20/2024 4:00:00 AM

First name: Carole

Last name: Cardon

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Forest Service,

I'm writing to give my support to the draft regulations of the National Old-Growth Amendment. I believe these regulations are long overdue and must be implemented immediately as a first step in protecting what little is left of our nation's Old Growth Forests.

One only has to look at a local forecast or out the window most days to see the detrimental effects global warming has on our local climates, wildfires, the air we breathe and the quality of our water. It's imperative that we stop the logging in all National Forests, but especially in Old Growth Forests in a last ditch effort to help protect our most essential national resource.

Scientists have been telling us for decades the importance of sustainable forest and land management planning. I think the Forest Service has lost sight of this while trying to stay afloat after decades of tight budgets.

I'm a reader and am often saddened to read stories of men and women with life long dreams of working for the Forest Service or BLM only to be met with antiquated policies that focus on ever increasing timber sales. I drive through highways lined with trees only to glimpse through what's left of them to find huge swaths of clear cutting. I can remember every detail of the first one I encountered in 1986. I was in Washington just south of Forks headed for the Hoh Rain Forest campground. Shortly after turning off Highway 101 we encountered a huge billboard telling us that we were about to see our Washington state tax dollars hard at work. Within minutes I saw what looked like the apocalypse. Devastation which I could only describe as the RAPE of the land in a way I couldn't even imagine was right before my eyes. I stopped, sobbing in disbelief at what I was seeing. Smoking stumps, not a single living tree remaining, undergrowth and land churned and ripped to shreds. Yes, this may have been a tiny strip of Washington State Forest surrounded by Olympic National Forest, but the same thing has been happening in National and BLM Forests throughout the country. In the past five years I've seen the same thing on the Peak to Peak Highway in Arapahoe and Roosevelt National Forests where I lived for 30 years in Colorado. It seemed like every time I pulled off the highway to walk in one of the many trails we all used, there was another rape scene. A fringe of trees left on the highway corridor to mask the devastation behind.

Scientists know how important undergrowth, fungal networks, and ancient Mother trees are to sustain new growth in a healthy forest. They know it takes 70 to 80 years for a new tree to start storing a level of carbon that's beneficial to the environment. At the rate we're going, I doubt we have that much time left.

I urge you please, to look at your children and grandchildren and ask yourselves how long any of us will survive

without the help of healthy, sustainable forests who give us the oxygen we need to breath, clean water, a healthy climate and a world that's not on fire. This is our last chance and it's no time to be a coward. Please step up now.

Sincerely,

Carole Cardon