

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/17/2025 8:49:30 PM

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Comments: The fraction of old growth forests left in the PNW is dangerously small, with estimates suggesting that about 6% is left in Oregon and about 13% in Washington. The remaining Old growth should not be cut in the PNW because its other values are so great, including:

1. Old growth is extremely valuable for biodiversity, including insects, birds, mammals and fungi. As a mycologist I can specifically speak to its value as a refugia for many fungi that are valuable for ecosystem services, from aggregating soil to symbiotic interactions with plants. Old growth supports both more fungi and a different subset of fungi than younger forests do, and it takes many decades for logged forest to recover from logging. See my work:

Spencer, M., B. A. Roy, T. E. Thornton, L. C. R. Silva, and K. L. McGuire. 2023. Logging has legacy effects on the structure of soil fungal communities several decades after cessation in Western Cascade forest stands. *Frontiers in Forests and Global Change*: <https://doi.org/10.3389/ffgc.2023.791766>.

2. It will not help keep forests from burning if you cut old growth down. Recent work suggests that it is not a lack of fire suppression that drove recent large fires in the PNW but anomalous wind. Furthermore, management did not help. Instead, the recommended strategy is social, human management. See, for example:

Reilly, M. J. Z., A., J. S. Halofsy, C. Raymond, A. McEvoy, A. W. Dye, D. C. Donato, J. B. Kim, B. E. Potter, N. Walker, R. J. Davis, C. J. Dunn, D. M. Bell, M. J. Gregory, J. D. Johnston, B. J. Harvey, J. E. Holofsy, and B. K. Kerns. 2022. Cascadia Burning: The historic, but not historically unprecedented, 2020 wildfires in the Pacific Northwest, USA. *Ecosphere* <https://doi.org/10.1002/ecs2.4070>.

3. Old growth is a carbon sink. Old growth forests accumulate and store a lot of carbon. See, for example:

Luyssaert, S., E.-D. Schulze, A. Börner, A. Knohl, D. Hessenmöller, B. E. Law, P. Ciais, and J. Grace. 2008. Old-growth forests as global carbon sinks. *Nature* 455:213-215.