

Old growth forests are a magnificent and vital part of British Columbia. I am a forest professional that has invested in a university degree for forest management and have spent the last twenty-three years planning the harvesting of both old growth forests and the second growth forests that have arisen from previously harvested areas. I live and own a home in the small community of Gold River on Vancouver Island.

I am also a passionate hunter and fisherman. There are few things that bring me more joy than slowly walking through an old-growth stand looking for a blacktail deer, or standing on the banks of a river shrouded by magnificent old-growth trees while casting for an elusive steelhead. I also take comfort in the fact that I will always be able to do these activities I love in old-growth due to the significant amount of old-growth reserves that already exist. Significant amounts of old-growth are permanently protected in riparian areas, ungulate winter ranges, wildlife habitat areas, old-growth management areas, and provincial parks.

I am not going to list all the facts about how much old-growth is already protected, how many jobs are created, how much carbon is locked up through management of old-growth, or any other facts that this panel should be aware of. I hope that when considering the input that will be received, that facts are used for decision making. When emotion over-rides fact, good choices are rarely made.

Sincerely,

Brian Sommerfeld, RPF