

Dear Panel

My background is in the plant sciences with a doctorate in plant physiology and an undergrad focused primarily on ecology. My post-doctoral fellowship was looking at stress physiology in plants at UBC. Although I'm retired from research I do have grave concerns regarding the status of our old growth forests and other forests as well. I'm sure many people have responded from many perspectives so i will focus on just a couple of concepts that I feel are critical.

Fragmentation:

I respect that there are areas where forests can and will be treated as tree farms but in general this practice should be curtailed. In old growth forests the standard tree farming approach should be eliminated.

Current approaches of logging practice and policy need to be modified and enforced to ensure coherent functional forests remain when a logging company leaves a site. Cut block sizes need to be dramatically reduced and well defined pre/post-logging tree density measures criteria should become a standard logging protocol. This would increase the chances of the forest thriving after it has been logged. While this may not look like hard-core selective logging there needs to be a movement in that direction in order to ensure the survival of the ecosystems. This is not as cost effective for forest companies but ultimately the priority needs to be the health of the forests, both on a small scale and the larger more importantly on the connected forests that make up the biome.

Current practices are leading to large scale fragmenting of ecosystems where plants and animals are placed under extreme stress from habitat destruction and ecosystem failure or dysfunction is a near certainty.

Priorities:

Current priorities for management need to encompass a more balanced appreciation of the merits of these old growth forests. The current mentality of forestry economics as a priority and driving force of forest management needs to be re-evaluated. Other interests being seen as secondary leads to strictly short term economic decisions by forestry that are destroying these ecosystems. That is unfair to society and unfair to the forests that we are blessed to have available. It is also very short sighted. Changes in priorities will require a radical shift in how we think of the old growth forests and the forestry industry itself.

Thank you for your time

Sincerely
Dr. Eric G Norman
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