From: Samuel Yeaman <samuel.yeaman@ucalgary.ca>
Sent: January 14, 2020 7:27 AM
To: FLNR Old Growth BC FLNR:EX <Oldgrowthbc@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: Feedback on old growth

Hi there,

I just wanted to offer my two cents here. I'm an assistant professor at University of Calgary and as part of my research, I study adaptation to climate in trees that don't commonly grow into old-growth stands, due to more regular fire cycles (lodgepole pine and white spruce/Engelmann spruce). I also have a lot of personal engagement with the wilds of BC, as I lived there for 10 years and continue to visit regularly for wilderness excursions. On a two week ski trip through the Lillooet icefield region, I came across massive old cedars in the Lillooet river valley with 2-3 metre wide trunks, and was struck by their majesty. I wish I could say this was a common occurrence in my explorations, but very few of my trips through the south coast mountains have ever found such large trees. In so many places, the old growth has been harvested.

I am saddened at the loss of old growth forests, and I think it's absolutely absurd that we are logging what remains. I am fine with clearcutting the boreal forest, it is still very different than fire, but much more similar to the natural disturbance regime than logging in old-growth. Logging in the coast mountains makes less sense due to the erosion problems caused by roads and impact, but I guess it makes sense to continue to re-forest and harvest the lands that have already been harvested of their old growth. But I wish we would leave more of the old growth intact. I think old growth is clearly valuable for biodiversity and all sorts of other quantifiable things, but it also has value simply for its own sake. As an academic, I struggle to concretely define what I mean here. I guess it's just an abstract and completely subjective feeling that they are intrinsically valuable. There's just something about a big beautiful tree. Not sure how you put a dollar value on that, but there it is.

Thanks,
Sam Yeaman