

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you as a member of the Association of British Columbia Forest Professionals (ABCFP) and a Forester in Training (FIT) that resides and works within the forest industry on Vancouver Island. As a resident of Vancouver Island and someone who has a career in forestry, I see both sides of the issue at hand "Old Growth Management". I understand that there are certain unique values that are acquired by a stand or forest of trees that has reached the status of old growth, such as ecological and social values that seem to be talked about so much in the news and social media lately. However, I fear that there is a lot of misinformation and fear mongering that is being spread to people who are not educated in the topics at hand. It's worrisome when people from the general public are so quick to make rash decisions about how old growth forests should be managed when they are not being shown both sides of the story. From what I can tell the one side they are seeing seems to be based on biased data that has not been substantiated by a professional body... It can be a slippery slope.

I believe one part that is not talked about enough is the financial or economic aspect of the old growth. It employs such a large number of people in BC and on the coast. In smaller community's forestry might be the only industrial job available that pays a decent wage, which funds many other businesses and economics in those communities. These jobs rely on old growth and the companies logging old growth abide by sustainability metrics that have been built and implemented in land use plans and forest stewardship plans to allow for logging of these forests sustainably until second growth forests can be fully relied upon.

If the tap for old growth logging were to be turned off tomorrow there would be an unimaginable negative effect in BC, seen as how logging makes up 20% or \$2.1 billion dollars of BC GDP of which \$1.4 billion is labor income. It's concerning when the vast-majority of BC's population lives in cities such as Vancouver and Victoria where they are so far removed from forests and old growth but due to their population have such a strong say in what we decide as a province is the best course of action. Meanwhile, citizens in towns such as Port McNeil, Woss, Zeballos, Gold River, Campbell River, and Port Alberni where almost every family has one or more forestry workers, will struggle to have their voices heard. These will be the people wearing the brunt of harsh cutbacks of old growth logging because as said before there is misinformation being given to uneducated people. Information such as portraying all old growth as Cathedral Grove, we are "seeing them disappear overnight", or "there is very little old growth left", and "10 per cent of the oldest trees remain and clear-cutting is taking place at a rate of three-square meters per second" (Sierra Club).

Research done by industry that has been substantiated by a professional body shows that 3.5 million hectares (42%) of 8.4 million hectares on the coast is old growth and that 1.93 million hectares (55%) of the 3.5 million hectares is protected in parks and reserves. 2.8 million hectares of old growth will never even be logged due to other constraints, but because some of it doesn't look like cathedral grove it gets brushed under the rug and out of people's consideration.

It is fear mongering and misinformation as talked about above that needs to stop so both sides can be heard and a reasonable outcome that works for both sides can be reached. I would like to urge you to remember while deliberating that the working professional foresters are the ones with the most knowledge of old growth management and I would hope this panel would seek the advice of the professional forester community and heed that guidance with great weight as it may be the most unbiased and accurate information you will receive.

Thank you for your time, I hope what I have said above resonates with you as you make your decisions and recommendations as you hold the future of a lot of peoples lives in your hands.

Kind regards,  
Taylor Martin, FIT