



December 15, 2021

Marvin Ellison, CEO  
1000 Lowe's Blvd.  
 Mooresville, NC 28117

Dear Mr. Ellison:

We write to urge you to use Lowe's purchasing power to protect the boreal forest, which is critically important for the climate, biological diversity and the communities that rely upon it.

Over the past few decades, as information about climate change, sustainable forestry and conservation of endangered species became available, Lowe's has demonstrated the desire and ability to adapt. This is demonstrated by Lowe's commitment to achieving 100% responsible sourcing of wood products by 2025. We also appreciate your goal of sourcing 100% Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood products from identified regions of risk and look forward to its rapid realization.

Lowe's actions not only reflect the changing values of your consumers, but also convey the company's commitment to stewardship of the environment. Thank you for the actions you have taken. Now that a [global consensus](#) is forming that the protection of primary forests is of urgent importance, it is time for Lowe's to go further.

The Canadian boreal forest is the largest remaining primary forest on the planet. It stores 300 billion tons of carbon, provides habitat for threatened boreal caribou, billions of birds and a multitude of other species. The boreal is essential to the sustenance and culture of hundreds of Indigenous communities. Unfortunately, one and a half football fields' worth of the forest are cut down every minute to produce softwood lumber, wood pulp and other products. American companies like Lowe's contribute to demand for these products.

Canadian federal and provincial regulations and compliance protocols are not preventing certain timber companies from engaging in practices that neglect their carbon footprint, threaten the survival of species, and violate the rights of the Indigenous Peoples who live in the boreal forest. For this reason, it is incumbent upon companies that purchase wood products sourced from the boreal forest to leverage their market power to protect the forest without adversely affecting

other forests. Lowe's sources 90% of its wood from North America, and it is our understanding that a portion of your wood originates in the Canadian boreal forest.

For this reason, we are asking Lowe's to improve its global wood sourcing policy by making the following commitments:

- 1. Increase the amount of FSC certified wood products sourced.**
  - a. Identify the boreal forest in Canada as a region at risk.
  - b. Make the fulfillment of your goal to source 100% Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood products from identified regions of risk a priority, and achieve this goal by the end of 2022.
  - c. Prioritize sourcing all wood products from FSC certified forests by committing to reach 95% FSC certified wood by 2025, with an incremental goal of 50% FSC certified wood by 2023.
- 2. Establish policies that define and protect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the local communities that use or rely on forests logged by Lowe's suppliers.**
  - a. Require your suppliers to adhere to the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and require proof and documentation of free, prior, and informed consent when suppliers operate in Indigenous and local communities' lands.
  - b. Implement a clear and transparent grievance mechanism and protocol, so that individuals, communities, and organizations may file grievances with Lowe's if violations of its policies occur within its supply chain, and so that consequences for supplier violations are clear, time-bound, and sufficient to prevent future violations.
- 3. Implement policies that protect biodiversity and take steps to reduce Lowe's impact on the climate.**
  - a. Exclude all primary forests, as defined by the [U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization](#), and threatened species habitat from Lowe's sourcing.
  - b. Include Scope 3 emissions caused by the extraction of forest commodities in Lowe's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

These actions will not only help to protect the boreal, and in so doing protect our climate and important species, but will establish Lowe's as a leader in sustainable forestry. We urge you to act.

We would very much like to discuss these proposed actions (or others that the company is contemplating) and believe that we can have a healthy dialogue about our shared goals of good stewardship.

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,

Sammy Herdman  
Boreal Forest Campaign Associate  
Environment America

Len Montgomery  
Director, Public Lands Campaign  
Environment America

Steve Blackledge  
Senior Director, Conservation America Campaign  
Environment America

Cc: Chris Cassell, Vice President of Corporate Sustainability