

Your Summer Report

To log or let grow: The fate of our oldest forests hangs in the balance

By Ellen Montgomery, director of our national public lands campaigns

Just because a forest is on federal land doesn't mean it is protected from logging. In fact, logging and selling of wood is built into the missions of two federal agencies, the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). That means logging is a persistent threat to many forests and trees that should be protected.

Some old forests are being logged right now. The Forest Service and BLM have approved numerous logging projects across hundreds of thousands of acres that target mature and old-growth trees, which store vast amounts of carbon and provide havens for a diverse array of wild plants and animals.

But thanks to hundreds of thousands of people who are speaking up for the trees—including Environment Washington members like you—we've urged the Biden administration to establish protections for these mature and old-growth trees and forests.

Progress on safeguards

In December, the U.S. Forest Service proposed the first nationwide plan to improve safeguards for old-growth forests. The proposal came after more than 500,000 comments submitted last summer urged swift and durable action to protect mature and old-growth forests.

The draft proposal sets ambitious goals for managing and expanding old growth in national forests, but contains major gaps. Notably, it carves out the Tongass National Forest—our largest



Last summer, staff delivered more than 500,000 comments urging the U.S. Forest Service to protect old-growth forests.

old growth national forest—from protection. The proposal also leaves open the option to sell old-growth trees to timber mills that have been logged as part of ecological projects. And it does not offer protections for mature trees and forests, which if not logged, will eventually become old-growth. Our national forests, especially in the eastern United States, have little old-growth remaining.

During a public comment period that closed in early February, thousands of supporters like you asked for stronger provisions that eliminate commercial logging of old-growth trees.

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Thanks
for making it
all possible

Washington citizens lobby in support of plastic waste bill

Washington state's waste management systems are struggling to keep up with an excess production of single-use packaging. Nearly half of all plastic produced is meant to be used once, then thrown away, which adds up to a whole lot of waste that ends up littering neighborhoods, shorelines, parks and harming wildlife in Washington and beyond.

Ricky Osborne



In January, more than 100 local supporters met with Washington state legislators in support of policies to reduce plastic waste.

To address these concerns, Environment Washington teamed up with the Plastic Free Coalition in Olympia alongside Washingtonian citizens to voice support for an end to plastic waste during a lobby day at the state capitol in January. Nearly half of those in attendance were youth activists from all regions of Washington state, including high school and university students who took time to advocate for solutions to addressing their state's plastic crisis.

Volunteers and supporters met with more than 70 Washington state legislators to discuss the ReWRAP Act, legislation which aims to reduce waste and create recycling standards as well as hold producers financially responsible for the end of life costs of their packaging products.

Unfortunately, the ReWRAP Act has not advanced in this year's legislative process, but thanks to the passionate voices of Washingtonians, many of them members like you, we are in a stronger position to push the ReWRAP Act again next year.

FedEx should absolutely, positively 'go solar'

When you drop off an overnight package with FedEx, wouldn't you feel better if the energy used to deliver that package to its destination came from clean, renewable solar power?

On Jan. 11, our research partner Environment America Research & Policy Center delivered 11,500 petition signatures to FedEx world headquarters, urging the shipping leader to put solar panels on its warehouses and parking lots by 2035.

FedEx owns and operates more than 5,000 facilities with at least 122 million square feet of rooftop space. Researchers at Environment America Research & Policy Center determined that if FedEx maximized the solar potential of its roofs, the company's rooftop solar arrays could provide 61% of the electricity it purchased in 2021.

According to the report "Solar on Warehouses," if all of America's warehouse roofs had solar panels, they could produce enough energy to power more than 19 million average homes.

"We absolutely, positively need to generate more of our energy from clean, renewable sources," said Johanna Neumann, senior director of the Campaign for 100% Renewable Energy at Environment America Research & Policy Center. "FedEx can help America deliver on the promise of a cleaner, greener future."

EPA rule means less soot in the air we breathe

Thousands of people die each year from illnesses related to soot exposure, one of the deadliest forms of air pollution. Now, those statistics should be changing for the better.

After more than 500,000 comments from Americans and members like you called for stronger standards against soot pollution, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) finalized a rule aimed at curbing soot pollution, a major contributor to respiratory illnesses, heart issues and cancer. The new guidelines are estimated to prevent 4,500 premature deaths and 800,000 instances of asthma symptoms annually.

"Air pollution used to be the price we had to pay to heat our homes, commute or produce goods by burning coal, oil and gas," said Lisa Frank, executive director of Environment America Research & Policy Center's Washington Office. "Thankfully, in the rapidly accelerating renewable energy era, that's no longer the case. These soot standards will save lives, clear our skies and alleviate the burden of asthma and other illnesses. That's something all Americans should celebrate."

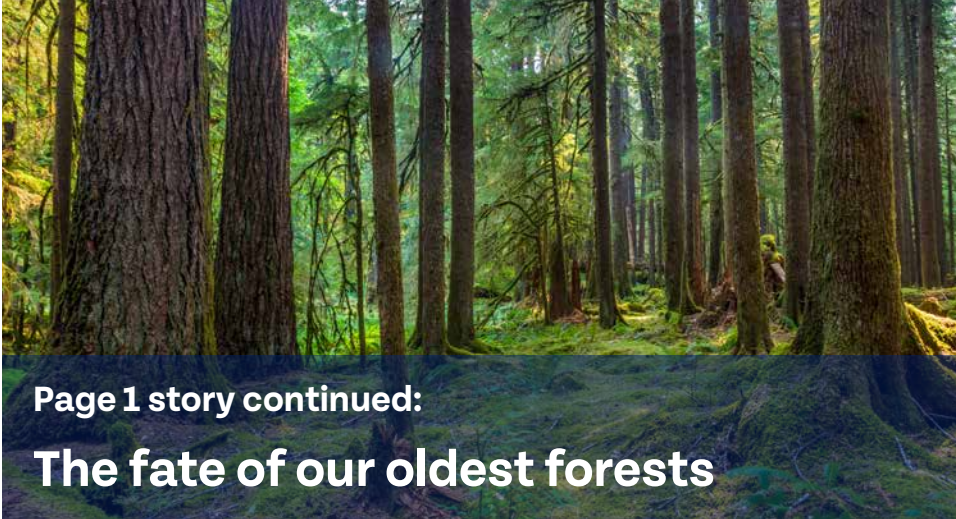
Get more updates on our work online at <https://environmentwashington.org>.



Toward a greener future

Support our work to build a cleaner, greener, healthier future by including a gift to Environment Washington or Environment Washington Research & Policy Center in your will, trust or retirement accounts.

For more information call 1-800-841-7299 or send an email to: PlannedGiving@EnvironmentWashington.org



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The fate of our oldest forests

Tens of thousands of people and more than 170 organizations called on the U.S. Forest Service to strengthen its proposal to conserve old growth trees and forests on federal land.

Standing together for the trees

We've urged Congress to oppose the Manchin-Barrasso bill, which calls for deliberately chopping down our mature forests as a way to "improve forest health"—an obviously terrible and short-sighted idea.

Once our mature forests are gone, they'll take decades to grow back. That's more than 80 years of an intricate ecosystem destroyed in the blink of an eye. That's decades we don't have to keep huge amounts of climate-warming carbon from being released into the atmosphere.

We need our forests to stay standing for generations to come, but the Manchin-Barrasso bill threatens to level towering giants and destroy many of our nation's mature trees.

Thankfully, supporters and members of Environment Washington and our national network took more than 32,000 actions opposing this bill.

All of our old-growth and mature forests deserve protection

Seventy-six percent of the forests managed by the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management don't have strong protections from logging.

We can't afford to cut down our oldest forests. They shelter wildlife and they shelter us from the worst impacts of climate change by absorbing carbon from our atmosphere.

Thanks to your support, we're working to save our forests by raising the voices of forest defenders everywhere and urging the Biden administration to enact the strongest protections possible to keep them off the chopping block.

With your support, we'll keep advocating for the strongest protections possible for our old-growth and mature forests.



Staff

Featured staff



Kimball Nelson

Pam Clough
Advocate

As an advocate with Environment Washington, Pam develops and runs campaigns to protect Washington's environment. Pam has worked on issues ranging from wildlife restoration, clean energy and climate solutions, plastic pollution, and clean water. Pam's organizing has helped reduce kid's exposure to lead in drinking water in Washington public schools, ban polystyrene foam packaging peanuts and food containers statewide, and win advances in clean building energy standards to advance climate solutions. Pam lives in Seattle, Washington, where she enjoys recreating on Puget Sound, skiing and hiking all year, and gardening.



Environment Washington and The Public Interest Network are celebrating 50 years of action for a change.

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Your 2024 Summer Report

Our mission:

We all want clean air, clean water and open spaces. But it takes independent research and tough-minded advocacy to win concrete results for our environment, especially when powerful interests stand in the way of environmental progress.

That's the idea behind Environment Washington, Inc., a project of Environment America, Inc. We focus on protecting Washington's air, water and open spaces. We speak out and take action at the local, state and national levels to improve the quality of our environment and our lives.

Save the salmon to save the orcas

In January, an orca calf was born into one of the Southern Resident groups that live off the Washington coast. This is the group's first calf since 2022. But in order for it to survive, salmon, the main food source of these orcas, must be saved too.

Orca whales play a crucial role in a balanced marine ecosystem. But the Southern Resident orcas, which reside off the coast of the Pacific Northwest, are critically endangered, with numbers just shy of 80.

Environment Washington is calling for dams in the Lower Snake River to be breached in order to recover salmon populations and restore river and ocean ecosystems.

Last June, our supporters and others submitted more than 10,000 public comments to the Biden administration's Council on Environmental Quality in favor of breaching these dams.

"We have alternatives for how we can power our society and move goods from one place to another. Salmon don't have this choice. They need a river, and orca need salmon," said Environment Washington Advocate Pam Clough.

This summer we're planning to knock on doors to speak to Washingtonians across the state to build support for this proposal in order to save both Chinook salmon and Southern Resident orcas.

Environment Washington is calling for dams in the Lower Snake River to be breached in order to recover salmon populations, a major food source for orcas.



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