

# SAVE OLD-GROWTH FORESTS



## The crisis in BC's forests

BC's old-growth and communities are in crisis. In most parts of the province the remaining ancient forests are too small to sustain the plants and animals that depend on them and too little is protected. Raw log exports are at a record high and a number of mills have closed. Indigenous rights are often ignored and there is no provincial support for Indigenous Nations seeking to protect more forests. Climate change and massive forest fires are here to stay. But we're still clearcutting the most diverse, resilient and carbon rich forests in the province.

Across BC, old-growth forests are being cut at the staggering **rate of more than 500 soccer fields per day**.

In fact, intact rainforest on Vancouver Island is destroyed 3 times faster than the Amazon rainforest!

Our provincial government made an election promise to sustainably manage BC's spectacular old-growth forests and other ecosystems using solutions based on conservation science. But after more than 2 years in office, they have yet to take any meaningful steps to protect endangered ancient rainforests on Vancouver Island and across the province.

## We're calling on the BC government to:

- **Immediately halt industrial logging in endangered old-growth ecosystems and hotspots** at threat of being logged, including the Central Walbran Valley, Schmidt Creek, the Nahmint Valley, East Creek, Thasis and Leiner Rivers, Nootka Island, and intact inland rainforest areas on the mainland.
- **Support Indigenous Nations** pursuing land use planning, increased protection with conservation financing solutions and protected areas that respect their rights, title and governance
- **Establish old-growth legislation** applying the conservation science used in the Great Bear Rainforest as a model
- **Create good long term forestry jobs** in sustainable, value-added, second-growth forestry that creates more jobs and leaves less damage, phasing out raw log exports

## Learn more and take action at [RainforestIsland.ca](http://RainforestIsland.ca)

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# OLD-GROWTH FORESTS FAQ



## Why is it important to save the last old-growth forests?

BC's precious old-growth forests are a global treasure. They include some of the rarest ecosystems on the planet. But today the majority of the ancient forests have been clearcut across vast parts of the province. Because of climate change, these forests will never grow back as we knew them—if we cut them, they'll be gone forever.

On Vancouver Island, a century of industrialized logging has resulted in about 80% of the original old-growth forests being logged, including over 90% of the valley bottoms where the biggest trees are found.

Continued old-growth logging threatens plant and animal species, releases huge amounts of carbon emissions, harms fresh water sources and fish habitat, and negatively impacts communities and Indigenous Nations.

Plants and animals that depend on these threatened forests, like the red-legged frog, marbled murrelets and northern goshawks, are at risk too. They're losing habitat and can't survive when a growing number of areas are covered by young, even-aged forests that are clearcut repeatedly.

In many places the economic value of protecting old-growth forests for ecotourism now outweighs the economic benefits of logging them. A growing number of Indigenous Nations, forestry unions, international scientists, BC chambers of commerce, municipalities and regional districts have all called for more old-growth forest protection.

Independent polling shows that 90% of British Columbians want the province to take action for endangered old-growth forests. It's our global responsibility to protect them as a legacy for future generations.

## What about forestry jobs?

We're advocating for a transition to truly sustainable forestry and protection of endangered forests. We're calling for a phase-out of raw log exports and a transition to improved forest management that respects nature's limits and ensures communities have clean water, clean air and a stable climate.

Improved practices will create more jobs and result in less damage, including protecting communities from climate impacts like drought, flooding and landslides. Raw logs continue being shipped overseas in huge numbers, which means a big loss of post-processing jobs. A third of forestry jobs have disappeared since 2000.

## What is the BC government doing to protect forests?

When the NDP took power in 2017, Premier Horgan wrote a formal letter instructing Forests Minister Doug Donaldson to "modernize land-use planning and sustainably manage BC's ecosystems, rivers, lakes, watersheds, forests and old-growth." But very little has been done in the years since. Now, we need to create more pressure to make sure words become action.

## But we plant trees, don't we? Won't those big trees just grow back?

Almost everywhere in BC second-growth forests are clearcut again before they become old-growth. As the climate is warming, the ecosystems of BC will change drastically in coming decades. Remaining old-growth forests can better cope with climate change than young forests. We must protect big trees and the carbon they have stored now to immediately reduce the loss of carbon from logging.

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