



# WILLAMETTE WEEK

## We Journeyed Deep Inside the Elliott State Forest, Before It Is Lost

This land is your land. But will it stay that way?

By Joe Riedl | Published April 5

We were 6 miles deep in the Elliott State Forest, and so far from any marked trail I feared we would never find our way back.

MOST READ

An hour ago, we left a logging road and started climbing up and down steep canyons, crossing trickling streams of frigid, crystalline water. We passed fern fronds twice as long as my arm, and boulders so fuzzy with emerald moss that they looked like Oregon Ducks throw pillows.

We were trying to find the oldest pocket of timber in the Elliott. We wanted to see this place before it was lost.

No piece of public land in Oregon is as imperiled, or as hotly debated, as this one.

The 93,000-acre state forest, hugging the Umpqua River a four-hour drive south from Portland, sits in the center of some of the richest timberland in the Coastal Range. Yet for decades the state has lost money while managing the harvest of fir trees here—and last fall, Oregon's top officials announced a plan to sell it for \$221 million to a timber company and the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians.

Last week, State Treasurer Tobias Read, the swing vote in favor of the sale, bowed to heavy pressure from environmental advocates and issued a statement saying he sees "a path forward" to keeping the land in public hands (see sidebar here).

That decision is now scheduled for May—with people on both sides of the sale still lobbying Read, Gov. Kate Brown, and Secretary of State Dennis Richardson. (Brown, a Democrat, opposes the sale; Richardson, a Republican, favors it.)

**Related: Text messages show the pressure placed on Tobias Read to keep the Elliott State Forest as public land.**

The Elliott has become a lightning rod in a growing national debate about the privatization of public lands. That's an especially fraught debate in Oregon, where more than half the land is owned by the federal or state government.

Plenty of Portlanders have talked about the Elliott this winter, often in righteous tones, without ever setting foot here. I was one of them.

*I want to see this place before it's all logged*, I decided last month, not realizing the Elliott has a long history of logging, and for nearly 100 years has been the site of timber company clear cuts.

I imagined the Elliott in black and white. But the people who spend their lives here taught me to see it in shades of green.

Those are people like Joe Metzler, a retired Coast Guard helicopter rescue swimmer and president of his local Audubon Society chapter. Metzler has become the most visible advocate for the forest remaining public. He's easily recognized in his bright red stockman-style hat, and eager to guide reporters into the woods.

"There's intrinsic value in the Elliott," Metzler told me, as we jostled in his Toyota Tacoma along a deeply rutted road outside the town of Lakeside. "Just because you haven't heard of it doesn't mean you shouldn't appreciate it."

Metzler was one of several people I spoke to during the past two weeks in Lakeside, Reedsport and the other timber towns surrounding the Elliott. These Oregonians see the Elliott as precious. But they also see it as an economic engine—one that has sat dormant for too long.

Metzler agrees. Like many people living on the coast, he blames the state's failure to turn a profit on the Elliott on the very environmental groups now working to save it. Those groups—the Center for Biological Diversity, Cascadia Wildlands and the Audubon Society of Portland—have repeatedly sued the state to limit timber harvests. Metzler sees that as essentially creating an economic incentive for the state to sell it to private owners.

"They had good intentions," Metzler says, "but it backfired on them."

While we drove, I followed Metzler's quick pointing finger, guiding me to conservation efforts the state has been leading, like the laying of timber and boulders in creeks for spawning coho salmon, and the preservation of many old-growth pockets, where bird species like the marbled murrelet nest on the massive branches.

Those efforts could disappear if the state sells. But the Umpqua tribe says it plans to go above and beyond what the state did for conservation (see interview, below).

Parking his pickup among the ferns, Metzler led me on a half-mile hike—or maybe more of a scramble, since we were mostly picking our way across precipitous ridges. He relayed the story of the Elliott as we trudged through mud and over downed trees.

Then we emerged in Silver Grove.

It felt like a temple. Shafts of sunlight filtered through the branches of trees that have stood in this grove for nearly 300 years. The air smelled of a fresh fir, woody and sweet. And the trees were huge: not as massive as California redwoods, but close, behemoths with trunks so large that three adults couldn't stretch their arms around them.

The Elliott State Forest isn't simple, I realized. But it is still holy.

In these pages, you'll meet the people who live among the giants. You'll learn why Tobias Read changed his mind. And through photos, I hope you'll get a glimpse of this place—one that few Oregonians have visited, and that public officials must soon decide whether should continue to belong to us.

"Public lands are the only place I can be myself," Metzler observes. "They're the greatest gift to the American people by the American people."

**Meet the people whose fates are entwined with the Elliott State Forest.** (More photos of the journey into the woods can be found below the interviews.)

### **Ellie Keeland**

Ellie Keeland, owner of Ellie's Chainsaw Carving Art Gallery, off Oregon Route 38 in Reedsport, is fed up with land restrictions in the Elliott. "The environmentalists, those idiots, forced the loggers out," she exclaims while counting her cash earnings for the day on a dusty workbench.

Keeland grew up in California but has spent most of her time in Southern Oregon. She moved to the outskirts of the forest near Loon Lake and ran a lodge there with her husband. She remembers the forest vividly: "Those trees grew faster than the loggers were cutting them. This was a model forest!"

Keeland doesn't much care if the state or a private company owns the Elliott. She just wants the logging jobs back. "That timber is our green gold," she says. "There's a wealth of natural resources behind Reedsport, but no one can tap into it anymore."

### **Keith Tymchuk**

Keith Tymchuk served six terms as mayor of Reedsport, a coastal timber town with a population of 4,090 (and dropping) about a 30-minute drive north of the state forest.

He's untroubled by the idea of privatizing the Elliott. Tymchuk expects that potential buyer Lone Rock Timber Management Co. would both abide by state policies and offer free public access to the forest—as most private logging companies already do. "It's a working forest," he says. "It was designed to create funds while offering public access."

"But I'm a realist," he adds, and for that reason "it's difficult to see a solution where everyone is happy." So he's noncommittal toward any specific plan—he just wants the environmental lawsuits against logging to stop.

**Rex Byers**

"Hell no, they shouldn't sell!" says Rex Byers over the hum of a chain saw in the background. The wood carver at Ellie's Chainsaw Carving Art Gallery says he hates the idea of the state selling the Elliott. "I'm no environmentalist," he says, "but this forest is breathtaking."

Byers is a Southern Oregon native whose family members are employed by what remains of the state's timber industry. He recalls fishing in the Millicoma River and hunting elk. He wants a public vote on the sale. He also wants an end to the environmental restrictions that have curtailed logging in the Elliott. "Don't sell the forest," Byers says. "Sell the timber."

**Michael Rondeau**

CEO of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians, Michael Rondeau says the sale of the Elliott to his tribe and a private timber company could have benefited his people immensely and in many different ways. "We saw this as a way to restore our land base," he says.

Rondeau says timber harvests could bring in much-needed revenue for tribal elders' health care. "We see the forest in decay," he says, and describes the sale as an opportunity to help conserve it. "The forest needs to be managed. We saw this as a path towards securing conservation efforts forever," instead of just from administration to administration.

And Rondeau says if the state decides ultimately to sell, the Cow Creek Band would keep the land open to the public. "Public access was a foundation which our proposal was built on," says Rondeau. "We drink the water, we breathe the air. We have interest in conserving the land for future generations, just like we've been doing for thousands of years."

**Correction:** This story initially misidentified the town of Lakeside, Ore. as Lakeview. WW regrets the error.

**COMMENTS**

83 Comments Willamette Week  Bob Zybach ▾

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 **Deschutes Redside** • 2 months ago  
Oregon, where we are still debating whether or not we should clearcut old-growth on public land in 2017. Half the Elliott is made up of stands over 100 years old, but there is plenty of money to be made off thinning the younger stands. The Department of State Lands confused their obligation to make money off the Elliott with "maximize revenue." Maximize in their minds meant selling it off to private logging interests.

The state should keep it in public ownership, set aside the remaining old-growth for permanent protection, and focus timber harvest on the younger stands. It isn't rocket science, the Siuslaw National Forest right next door has done this for 20 years, and routinely exceeds the timber quota Congress funds it to meet. Invest in developing recreation infrastructure (some old-growth trails, mountain biking trails, a state park-style campground) to spur tourism and recreation in the area.

Logging today is highly automated, it takes 1/4 of the work force to run a mill that it did 20 years ago. The logging jobs aren't coming back any more than the coal mining jobs are in West Virginia. Oregon needs to figure out how to build an economy that works for the region for the future, not

how to build an economy that works for the region for the future, not obsess on futile ideas to resurrect the clearcut logging economy of 1975.

8 ^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Socratic|Sardonic** → Deschutes Redside · 2 months ago

Spot on. The logging jobs are mostly gone, lets say all this happens they would be looking at a few dozen extra jobs max. The absolute last thing we need to do is return to 70's-80's logging practices.

Sustainable harvesting that matches a natural burn is the future. It's not too far off either, the forestry students today are more motivated to change the industry than ever before.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Dave Lister** → Socratic|Sardonic · 2 months ago

All industries have automated over the years. But to say that loggers and coal miners and all the other jobs will not recover is not quite right. Any industry that is revived creates jobs. Maybe not as many as in the past, but maybe much better paying and, therefore, much better taxpaying.

^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Socratic|Sardonic** → Dave Lister · 2 months ago

I do get and appreciate that sentiment, but an engineer running an automated system is not a "logger" or a "coal miner". They wouldn't be hiring the same person they would have been without automation, and where is that manual laborer supposed to get hired now? There will always be people who are destined for manual labor, 25 years ago they still made good money too. But today they're a downward spiral to a wage gap similar to the kings and castle days. If we don't figure out how to implement automation without erasing all the labor jobs there will be a large class of people who live like peasants under the rest. Population goes up, well paying jobs go down. I bet it will only take a few generations too...

^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Dave Lister** → Socratic|Sardonic · 2 months ago

I agree. Just like Vonnegut's "Player Piano".

^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Rich Morgan** → Deschutes Redside · a month ago

Makes sense, great comment, well thought out.

^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Social Glimpse** → Deschutes Redside · 2 months ago

correct, but then would add this as a "habitat" it took say 40-60 years to build, is exactly what is required for mushroom, before you scoff, check out the facts, oregon is is #1 in world, and less than a quarter is on books, all cash, focus shift to harvest so schools are funded and we might see annual profit far above cut that removes resource and sets back "habitat", it could be win, win, if state inoculated truffle spore, hundreds of millions, every year for perpetuity.

^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Chass Thuresson** → Social Glimpse · 18 days ago

Mushroom hunting is labor intensive. Even the best mushroom hunters aren't getting rich. I don't believe there is enough revenue to tax and still leave the mushroom hunters much to live on.

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 **Social Glimpse** → Chass Thuresson · 17 days ago  
 1 acre of truffle can yield \$100,000 a year, it takes six years for the spore to mature to that level, with proper planting, show me another crop that can yield every year the same? Yeah, not all ground suitable, but with that biome much is, it would be many hundreds of millions every year, without cutting one stick, hey don;t beat yourself up, lots of people are ignorant about subject.

^ | v · Reply · Share ·

 **Chass Thuresson** → Social Glimpse · 17 days ago  
 Are you suggesting seeding those forests? Would you seed them with perigord or with native species? To my knowledge, there are few to no producing truffle orchards in the US. We do collect lots of white truffles but they typically grow in early successional fir forests with trees in the range from 15 to 25 years. (I've hunted them at farms near Salem a couple times and had success when hunting in our area near Eugene). My family and I teamed up with Charles Lefever when we lived out near the airport in Eugene to plant about 2 acres of inoculated "truffle" trees. These are the perigord variety of course. They still aren't producing 12 years later.

Now, the species that we find lots of in the Elliot, Chanterelles, go for \$2 to \$4 lb on average, early season aside. If you think anyone is going to make a

[see more](#)

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 **Social Glimpse** → Chass Thuresson · 16 days ago  
 Because "everything you know"...sorry I can't educate a stump, nor is it my job, and if your to lazy to open the door then tough shit, adios bumpkin, everything is published, a whole country put their future on it, obviously they should have checked with you ! ha ha ha toddle off!

^ | v · Reply · Share ·

 This comment was deleted.

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 **BetsyToll** → Guest · 2 months ago  
 Hopefully before it's sold off for commercial purposes.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ·

 **Pam Driscoll** → Guest · 2 months ago  
 YES! See above.

^ | v · Reply · Share ·

 **Scott** → Guest · 2 months ago  
 Even if timber is harvested, the carbon is sequestered in the wood products for decades, or centuries. Forests grow and capture new carbon. There is not enough \$ in carbon to pay property taxes and fire prevention/suppression annual

assessments.

^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Pam Driscoll** → Scott · 2 months ago

Half of the carbon stored in the forest is in the soil. So ANY logging is going to release carbon. Wood products do release carbon. Forest biologists are learning more and more about how forests work. Older trees send nutrients to younger and/or sick trees, there is much going on in the soils and understory of the forest. The forest is healthiest left intact. The more diversity the healthier; life in the forest is interdependent and works symbiotically.

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**Social Glimpse** → Guest · 2 months ago

The facts are mushroom harvest from there exceed what timber takings would be, if we enhanced and managed for forest products instead of thinking in takings on 40 year cycle, (coast range) we could prove the value and pull the theft out of "takings" in fungi, truffles are the answer, but host of medicinals are possible, time to stop being stupid in managing temperate forest, we have goldmine, just no vision!

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Socratic|Sardonic** → Social Glimpse · 2 months ago

Little vision, at most. Our forests are our most plentiful and most renewable resource. Plant products are literally the only naturally renewable resources on earth. Everything else exists in finite quantities and has a large carbon footprint.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Scott** → Social Glimpse · 2 months ago

So you can produce \$2,000 per acre over 82,000 acres, each year, from mushroom sales? I don't think so.

^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Pam Driscoll** → Scott · 2 months ago

What is missing from this economic "picture" is the irreplaceable and priceless services- or eco-system services healthy forests like the Elliott provide. There is no amount of money that can sequester carbon, clean the water and air and help create precipitation- to name just a few of these important gifts from the forest. Once it's logged, the forest is gone. It is now a tree farm. I suggest the "Natural Capitalism" method of pricing that Amory Lovins and Paul Hawkins describe in the book of the same title; Natural Capitalism. ALL the external costs are included in the price of a product.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Social Glimpse** → Scott · 2 months ago

It takes specific conditions, benches, swale, sinks, riparian zones, and for every suitable acre the potential in truffle is 100k per year after six years, if properly inoculated, not my job to hold your hand, due diligence, educate yourself, as Twain remarked: It's not what you don't know that gets you into trouble,...it's what you think you know for sure that just ain't so.

^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Chass Thuresson** → Guest • 17 days ago

After watching the entire hearing, I'm happy to have learned that Richardson did the right thing. This was a big win for the Elliott and the state.

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**Chass Thuresson** → Guest • 18 days ago

You really hit the nail on the head Mike A. I now pay for a Weyerhaeuser permit to the tune of \$300 per year to hunt the land behind my house. Land sold to Mr Weyerhaeuser as a sweetheart deal by the old railroad magnate James J Hill. These should have remained public lands IMO.

If the Elliot must be sold, I'd like to see guarantees of 100% public access in the deal. A rider that lives forever and is sold with the property. Similar riders protecting the older half of the forest should also be put in place. If we can't do this, it should not be sold. We can't just trust timber companies to "do the right thing". They've proven time and time again that this isn't in their repertoire. They are driven by profit as all corporations are. Perhaps it's not fault of their own but this is the way of the world.

Chass

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Pam Driscoll** → Guest • 2 months ago

The fire that burned from which the native old growth is left on the Elliott was in the 1860's would put half of the forest 150 years and some pockets in there did not burn; so there are trees up to 400 years old. Oregon Live has an excellent graphic that allows you to see with pinpoint accuracy what the age of the stands of trees are. The native old-growth forest that has grown out of the burned areas are very healthy and bio-diverse. This is about 40,000 acres. The plan Gov. Brown has is to decouple this native old-growth part of the forest from the Common School Fund allowing the other half which is a tree farm, to be thinned and cut for generating revenue. What is truly exciting is we can get paid for the carbon sequestered on the native half of the Elliott; one of the top ten forests in the world for carbon sequestration per acre!

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**CamasBlues** • 2 months ago

Frankly I resent the Cow Creek trying to build their land base on lands that were never theirs - or even close to their country. Their homelands are in the South Umpqua valley in the Cow Creek watershed. The lands of the Elliott are part of the Hanis Coos and Quuiich (Lower Umpqua) lands. (In spite of the similarity of names, the Lower Umpqua and Cow Creek Umpqua aren't related - between them were the Yoncalla and Athabaskan-speaking Upper Umpqua tribes).

Second, I don't trust a timber company to take care of the land - they will clearcut as much as they can get away with and silt up the streams (again). There is good salmon habitat, especially in Qet'diiye (Palouse) and the Kuggwich (Millicoma) watersheds for steelhead and coho, mainly.

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**Pam Driscoll** • 2 months ago

A fact that is not often revealed: The reason the Elliott forest lost money the year before last was because the state allowed a couple of timber sales in areas that had been documented as Marbled Murrelet habitat. About 40,000 acres of the Elliott is native old-growth forest that should be saved and restored for all the ecosystem services it provides, not the least is the vast amounts of carbon stored there. The Elliott forest has one of the best forests per acre for carbon storage of any in the world! This carbon sequestration could eventually be a source of funding. A win-win for the forest, Oregonians, the wildlife and the planet's biosphere. The days of logging old growth are over.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Scott** → Pam Driscoll • 2 months ago

I don't think your data on older timber stands in the Elliott is correct. Look at your history: a majority of the Elliott burned in the 1868 Coos Bay Fire. There were cedar snags from that burn harvested and sold 90 years later...

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Pam Driscoll** → Scott • 2 months ago

Half of the Elliott Forest was burned, and there are pockets of forest there that did not burn. EcoTrust in Portland, Oregon did a carbon sequestration analysis of the Elliott and Francis Eatherington gave a presentation based on these studies at the PIELC at U of O this March.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**G Daniels** • 2 months ago

\$220 million seems like a good price for maybe a 10 year lease on all the 2nd growth stands where there are already logging roads, while preserving all the old growth, scenic, recreational and ecologically sensitive areas. \$220 million for the whole forest is a major scam and rip-off played upon all Oregonians...

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Dwight** • 2 months ago

Something else not discussed is the efficiency of the land board itself. They sell the loggable timber for pennies, essentially giving it away to the private companies. If they actually sold the timber at it's actual value this wouldn't even be an issue, but the timber companies know they can under bid and basically get a giveaway.

I also wonder about the cost of the land board. I think if they want to privatize anything it should be the people and process of selling the young timber instead of the bloated, unaccountable bureaucrats in the dept of lands.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**The professor** • 2 months ago

If it's sold to the lumber company , they'll clear cut it. As much rain as that area gets a year clear cutting would be a disaster not only for the land but the water and the total environment . The geography of the area is too rugged for selective cutting , so the land should remain as public domain.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Pam Driscoll** → The professor • 2 months ago

Another point not brought up: The tourism industry brings in billions of dollars every year in Oregon and is the third largest industry for the state. Many, if not most people visit Oregon for the natural beauty and there are several legislators looking into the potential to make the 40,000 acres of the native/old-growth part

potential to make the 40,000 acres of the native, old-growth part of the Elliott forest a state park with campsites, trails and more to attract visitors.

4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Scott** → Pam Driscoll · 2 months ago

Tourists? Really? Have you ever visited the Elliott? There are only a few access points (along Hwy 38 to Loon Lake, or near Reedsport) and out of the Coos Bay area. The majority of the Elliott is a STEEP, RUGGED landscape with a few streams accessed by roads. Knife Ridge Road is descriptive in itself. Most recreation is by driving, with hunting big game as the goal. Big game is usually shot in recent clear-cuts... pity the hunter who kills a bull elk at the bottom of a harvest unit! She better have a strong back.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Pam Driscoll** → Scott · 2 months ago

Yes, I was there last week. I went to the Jazz in the Forest with Darrell Grant from Portland. It is an amazing forest and there are some really steep areas. Loon Lake has a quaint lodge and there are lots of smiling faces there. More trails, better signage and some good camping sites and we have a state park.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**G Daniels** · 2 months ago

Nice photos, good work getting out of Portland and reporting on a less popular area of Oregon.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Oregon State Forest** · 2 months ago

Nice to see coverage of the Elliott (2 ts!). Learn more how it would affect sportsmen: [keeptheelliottpublic.org](http://keeptheelliottpublic.org)

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Pam Driscoll** → Oregon State Forest · 2 months ago

I have a friend who bow hunts for elk in the Elliott...he puts this forest up there with some of the national parks. This forest must be kept public and the native/old-growth must be preserved and restored. Let's use the half that is already a tree farm for thinning/revenue and leave the forest alone for all the wildlife and ecosystem services it provides. We are in the sixth mass species extinction and it's the only one in the history of the world that is human caused. Keeping these places intact are our best strategies.

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**dre** · 2 months ago



yeah, don't tuss with public lands too much. the money gained is not really a profit for the state or fed, but mostly a way to help small towns. glad this reporter had a holy experience with oregon forest - there is a ton that has been disturbed that is still lovely next to the old growth that makes one feel like they are walking amongst dinosaurs.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Socratic|Sardonic** · 2 months ago

I can't stand how people act like the current forestry programs and students they produce aren't green-minded or something. There has never been a more sustainability focused ethos than is going on right now. Every single person graduating from those forestry programs is absolutely committed to green harvesting techniques and fixing the public perception about harvesting the forests.

What's with the people who think because a tree is cut down it **has** to be a bad thing? *Lumber is literally the only naturally renewable building material on earth*, all other building materials are made from materials that are extracted from the earth, some exist in limited quantities, all have huge carbon footprint to manufacture, and all can never go back into the earth once extracted. Do people want to build with something that's extracted from the earth then ends up in a landfill, or something that's a natural product, is fully biodegradable, and can simply be grown from a seed? Think about it. Lumber **is** the environmentally responsible choice of building materials if harvesting is done right.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Pam Driscoll** → Socratic|Sardonic · 2 months ago

Not true. Hemp is a building material. Check out Hempcrete. A house that is 1,000 square feet can be made of hempcrete that is made of hemp grown on less than three acres of farmland in FOUR MONTHS. This makes much more sense than cutting down important forests that take 40-60 YEARS. Watch the documentary "Bringing It Home" there are several examples of homes, apartments and office buildings made from hemp.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Pam Driscoll** → Pam Driscoll · 2 months ago

I'll add this. Logging can be done in a sustainable way but with not much profit. The real problem is greed. The big logging corporations/businesses have equipment that clear cut forest, builds roads, tears up the forest floor and sprays poisons to kill competing vegetation. There are ways to walk lighter while logging but you will not get wealthy; you will have a comfortable life with a good conscience. The big clear cut logging companies are flat out greedy.

^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Pam Driscoll** → Pam Driscoll · 2 months ago

Okay, I'll add some more; WE, the taxpayers, subsidize these big logging companies by paying for the logging roads on public lands. These roads are the biggest contributor to muddy creeks and rivers which hurt the fish populations. How about we implement a timber harvest tax comparable to what Washington and California states charge? That should help the Common School Fund.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ·



**Socratic|Sardonic** → Pam Driscoll · 2 months ago

Add it on the original comment with the edit feature if you want, but replying to yourself is just weird and I don't even get them sent to me. You would essentially be talking to yourself with these last two

if I didn't open this article back up and see these.

For the sake of streamlining this debate please respond to my other reply, not this one.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Pam Driscoll** → [Socratic|Sardonic](#) · 2 months ago

Just don't call me "normal" or "average", I'll take "weird." I've been working as a volunteer on the Elliott Forest proposal to sell for about nine months- when I'm not teaching. There are countless reasons to keep the Elliott in public ownership/stewardship and not one good reason to sell it. Not ONE.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Pam Driscoll** → [Pam Driscoll](#) · 2 months ago

Oh, can you open the conversation back up? Please?

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**The professor** → [Socratic|Sardonic](#) · 2 months ago

But how many logging companies would be able to do a sustainable harvest in that area. Probably very few and the environmental damage would be substantial.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Pam Driscoll** → [The professor](#) · 2 months ago

Big Timber has brought in billions of dollars of income for executives. They would lose. I hope they do. For far too long these types of greedy resource extractors have bought politicians to do their bidding at the cost of people and the planet. To the point of global warming, mass species extinction, polluting our air, water, soils and making people, animals, fish, etc. sick. There are ways to live in balance where the Earth's carrying capacity is respected and that is how we use and care for the biosphere.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Socratic|Sardonic** → [The professor](#) · 2 months ago

That's a common misconception and is exactly what I'm trying to address. Companies today are under ever increasing pressure to be green, not only that but most have already realized that it's in their best interest. How much business is there to be done if they ruin the forests? We all know this type of stuff doesn't happen overnight, especially with trees, our forestry science programs are still figuring out how to harvest the forests correctly but they've made leaps and bounds of progress. Our forests are one of our greatest resources if we can just use them properly somehow. "Environmentally sustainable" is a relatively new idea in forestry, sadly. Nobody started to seriously think that way until the 70s and it really didn't start to happen en masse until the late 80s. The recent graduates and current students in forestry programs are fantastic, they will have the forests in shape in a generation or two. Do they not have a forestry program at your University, Professor?

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**The professor** → [Socratic|Sardonic](#) · 2 months ago

Have you ever been in the forest after a logging operation? I have, It's not a pretty site. It takes decades for the forest to recover and in high rain fall areas it may never recover.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

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