

For Immediate Release

DNR Selling Off Century-Old Forest in Chehalis River Basin

The Center for Responsible Forestry appeals timber sale in Grays Harbor Superior Court as the Washington State Department of Natural Resources violates its own Habitat Conservation Plan and policies for sustainable forests.



The fate of some of Western Washington's most precious legacy forest hangs in the balance as DNR, under the leadership of Commissioner Hilary Franz, plans to hand it over for commercial logging.

In order to save this special 75-acre stand, on October 4th, 2021 the non-profit conservation organization Center for Responsible Forestry appealed the decision by the Board of Natural Resources to approve the "About Time" timber sale. The appeal was filed in Grays Harbor Superior Court.

This timber sale is located within one of the largest remaining blocks of older, natural, non-industrial forest in the Upper Chehalis River basin.

"Natural forests have all but disappeared from southwestern Washington," said Stephen Kropp, Director of the Center for Responsible Forestry. "Protecting the few older, natural or 'legacy' forest

remnants is critical to preserve the natural genetic and biological diversity of the region, improve the resilience of our forests to climate change, and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires."

Understanding the Value of this Unique and Special Place

Drive up into the headwaters of Raimie Creek, just west of Oakville, and you will find Douglas fir trees over four feet in diameter, rising up to 180 feet into the air, growing right along the side of the road. You are in the "About Time" timber sale, located in the Raimie-Rock legacy forest.

This forest is composed of a diverse mosaic of open stands populated by huge Douglas fir trees and standing dead snags, patches of deer fern, trillium, bleeding heart, and false lily of the valley, chest-high bracken fern, dense carpets of redwood sorrel shaded by century-old fir and hemlock trees, and dense thickets of vine maple and devil's club. Traveling through this legacy forest is truly a journey of discovery.

DNR Violating Its Own Permit

"Our interest is in seeing DNR manage its land in a manner that is consistent with the objectives of its Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), and existing DNR policies that are intended to conserve biodiversity and prevent the future listing of endangered species," said Krop.

Old-growth forest management targets are the primary means provided in the HCP and DNR's Policy for Sustainable Forests for achieving those objectives in southwestern Washington. Federal permits require that DNR maintain or restore between 12 to 22 percent of state forestlands to old growth conditions by the year 2096.

Currently, DNR is hopelessly behind in meeting its old-growth forest targets in this part of the state. CRF has presented dozens of documents, letters, and reports, and a wealth of supporting data to DNR that clearly demonstrates that their permit requirements and policy objectives cannot be met if they continue logging those forests that are most likely to achieve old growth status by 2096.

There are about 75 acres of older, natural, structurally complex forest that would be affected by the "About Time" timber sale. CRF is asking the court to invalidate the Board's approval of the "About Time" timber sale based on DNR's failure to account for the timber sale's probable and significant adverse impacts to the environment, and to prohibit DNR from commercially logging any part of the "About Time" timber sale that falls within the boundaries of the 1,200-acre Raimie-Rock legacy forest.

More information on this timber sale is available here:

<https://www.c4rf.org/about-time>