

Oregon Wild

Larry Olsen



USGS

# Old-Growth Forests: Global Warming Insurance

## How Pacific Northwest Mature & Old-Growth Forests Can Help Fight Global Warming

### Northwest Forests: Capturing Carbon from Roots to Tree Tops

As global warming has become the most profound issue facing the world today, our response to climate change will forever define our times. So far, discussed solutions have largely been focused on renewable energy like wind and solar, energy efficiency, and driving cars that go farther on a gallon of gas. But one glaring omission from the discussion has been the critical role that forests can play in fighting global warming.

**Roughly 18% of all global warming emissions are the result of deforestation.** In recent decades, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions resulting from human-induced changes to forests rival those from the transportation sector. Currently, Oregon's forests alone capture 51% of the total greenhouse gas emissions in the state. If we enact proper protections, Oregon's forests could sequester much, much more. That means that Oregon and the rest of the Pacific Northwest can play an important national role in fighting climate change.

*Pacific Northwest old-growth forests store more carbon per acre than any other ecosystem on the planet.*

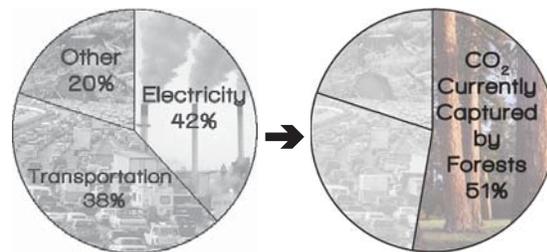
# Older Forests & Global Warming

## The Critical Values of our Old-Growth Forests

- In a time when more and more Americans are getting their drinking water from a bottle, those of us in the Pacific Northwest are still enjoying some of the best natural drinking water in the country thanks to mature and old-growth forests.
- According to the U.S. Forest Service, *80% of Oregonians* drink from streams and rivers that originate on federal public forests.
- Mature and old-growth forests provide the best possible habitat for threatened and endangered salmon and other wildlife.
- These legacy forests provide us with world-class recreational opportunities such as hiking, rafting, fishing, hunting, and camping.

photo: Frank Falat

## Oregon CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions Captured by Forests



Protecting and restoring mature and old-growth forests can be Oregon's greatest contribution to fighting global warming.

## Timber industry myths about old-growth forests and carbon storage

**Myth:** *Fast-growing young forests absorb more carbon and are better for the climate than slow-growing old forests.*

**Fact:** *Mature and old-growth forests store far more carbon than young forests. Most old forests are still growing and absorbing carbon.*

**Myth:** *It's better to store carbon in wood products than in forests.*

**Fact:** *Carbon is stored more securely in long-lived forests than in short-lived wood products.*

**Myth:** *Forests aren't good places to store carbon because forest fires release stored carbon through combustion.*

**Fact:** *Fire is an essential ecological process that helps forests stay healthy. Carbon release from logging is far greater than release through natural fire.*

## Get Involved!

We've already lost up to 90% of our old-growth forests, so there's no time to lose. We have an historic opportunity right now to enact strong, lasting protections for our mature and old-growth forests, but we need your help.

### Become an Oregon Wild member!

Our work depends on the support of members and organizations like yours. Help fight global warming and support our Old-Growth Campaign so that we can continue fighting for strong permanent protections for the last of our mature and old-growth forests.

### For more information contact:

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