

CONSERVATION NORTH

Use this cheat sheet to fill in the **Old-growth Strategic Review Questionnaire**
Go here to start the questionnaire: <https://feedback.engage.gov.bc.ca/747451?lang=en>

Open until 4:00 pm, January 31, 2020

What does the term "old growth" mean to you?

[Feel free to copy and paste the information below.]

Our definition of old growth pertains to the inland and boreal rainforests of BC's central-interior (mainly the wetter parts of the SBS, ICH and ESSF biogeoclimatic zones):

Old growth forest:

- Has never been industrially logged.
- Contains trees that are 250 years old or older.
- Is structurally complex. It includes old living trees, standing dead snags, long-downed logs, a multi-layered canopy, canopy gaps that allow understory growth, and hummocky micro-topography.
- Is where the complexity creates many habitats that support diverse interacting communities of specialists and generalists, from a rich soil micro-fauna to unique canopy communities, from berry bushes to devil's club, from marten to caribou.

What are the top three reasons you feel old growth forests are important? Please select up to three.

[Our suggestions are below.]

They support biodiversity

They provide habitat for wildlife and fish

"Other": They have innate value and are non-renewable.

[We suggest NOT selecting "They provide economic benefits from timber harvesting" as this maintains the status quo of liquidating old growth forests.]

How important is it to weigh environmental, social, cultural, and economic interests together when managing old growth?

[Skip this question because it is worded in such a way as to make any answer unlikely to contribute to the protection of old growth forests.]

What do you consider to be the THREE greatest risk(s) to old growth?

[We consider the following to be the greatest threats.]

Logging
Other Industrial activity

“Other”: Roads

[You might also include in “Other”:]

Why is “Not replanting fast enough” on this list? It is not possible for “Not replanting fast enough” to be a risk to old growth because old growth is non-renewable and cannot be replanted.

How important do you feel the following plans, policies and practices are in MANAGING old growth in British Columbia?

[Our suggestions are in bold.]

Provincial parks protecting old growth: **Very Important**

Land-use plans: **Important**

Protection measures built into forestry practices and other industrial activities: **Not Important**

Protecting defined patches of old growth on the landscape: **Very Important**

Relying on qualified professionals: **Leave blank and comment on this in the next question**

Ecosystem based management approaches: **Not Important**

Are there any other plans, policies or practices you feel are important but that are not mentioned here? Please provide any thoughts.

[Feel free to copy and paste the points below.]

The protection of old growth forest in BC requires:

1. Legislated protection of our remaining old growth.

This should start with an immediate moratorium on harvesting in the most endangered forests, which include the remaining productive, accessible stands of the inland temperate and spruce-fir rainforests. A science-based plan for the protection of all remaining primary forests in the interior should follow this moratorium.

2. A just transition away from the industrial harvest of our remaining old growth forest and towards community-based forestry focused exclusively on second-growth.

A planned but rapid transition to a sustainable economy that focuses harvesting on areas previously logged must occur. Returning public forests back to communities would enable this transition and would serve human and natural communities better than the existing tenure system.

Regarding relying on qualified professionals, they must be people who: 1) have knowledge of old growth ecosystems, 2) understand the value of these ecosystems beyond timber, and 3) are humble and appreciate uncertainty. Past reliance on professional timber experts has caused our current predicament. It is foolish to rely on professionals who maintain status quo while expecting them to protect our last old growth forests.

Other than the provincial government and First Nations, who do you feel should be actively involved with decision making about the future of old growth forests in British Columbia?

[Our suggestions are below.]

Naturalist or conservation groups

“Other”: Ecologists, biologists, elders and youth.

Where do you learn about old growth forests and their management?

[Check all that apply.]

Do you have any further thoughts about old growth management in B.C.? Please tell us more.

[Feel free to copy and paste the points below.]

Old growth forests are managed abysmally. The provincial focus of considering forests as simply a source of timber has been highly detrimental, and has reduced the area of old growth forests in BC to levels that pose high risk to biodiversity, forest resilience, and ecological integrity. Moreover, we should be asking what tools should we use to protect, not “manage”, old growth; it has already been “managed” to a small fraction of its original size by professionals.

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Existing forest harvesting policy threatens old growth forest in several ways:

- Current provincial policy considers retained old forest as a constraint and limits the timber supply impact to 4% across the province.
- Policy locates old growth ‘leave’ areas preferentially in forests that are not economical to harvest. These lower-productivity areas contain trees that are smaller or are inaccessible. Forest harvesting targets the biggest and oldest trees, and protects mainly low productivity old forests throughout most of the timber-harvesting land base.
- Policy and legal orders are clear that Old Growth Management Areas (OGMAs) are intended to conserve old forests, yet OGMAs are not necessarily comprised of old forest even where old forest is available.