



Stand4Forests: A Unified Call for Forest Protection in the United States

Forest protection in the US is an important part of a just solution to the climate crisis

From the majestic redwoods of the West to the inspiring cypress forests of the South, the health and well-being of people, plants, and animals are intricately connected to our life-giving forests. Climate science shows that we cannot stop a climate catastrophe without scaling up the protection of forests around the world, including in the United States. Therefore, the US must be a global leader in not only committing to phase out fossil fuel use but also in protecting our forests and shepherding a just transition. Standing forests in the US provide our communities with clean air, fresh water, carbon storage, are home to thousands of unique species of plants and animals, and protect us from flooding and drought, making forest protection a national and global priority.

The United States is the world's largest producer and consumer of wood products, which continues to drive massive extraction and degradation of forests at one of the fastest rates in the world.

When our forests are destroyed, degraded, converted to plantations, or harvested to burn for bioenergy, their climate and community benefits disappear. The destruction and degradation of US forests is a climate emergency, and we are clearcutting away a critical solution to the climate crisis. The social, ecological, and economic benefits of keeping our forests standing are not valued by the current system that puts corporate profit above the well-being of people and life on Earth.

Forest destruction is a major injustice, while forest protection could be a justice solution.

Communities living at the frontlines of forest destruction are often the same ones who are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change and face oppressive, polluting, and extractive industries. Communities of color, indigenous communities, low-income, and/or rural populations disproportionately bear the impacts of climate change as well as the health, economic, and social costs associated with industrial practices. Forests play an important role in safeguarding communities from the worst impacts of climate change. By scaling up US forest protection, we can mitigate flooding and storm surges in our communities and ensure that millions of people have clean drinking water, while creating local, sustainable, and equitable economies.

The US must immediately scale up forest protection, rewild and restore degraded forests, reduce consumption, and transition to truly clean, renewable energy before it is too late.

Standing forests draw enormous amounts of carbon out of the atmosphere and store it long-term in trees and soil. To avoid a climate catastrophe, we must shift the current paradigm and rethink the way we value forests. By doing so, US forests help provide a cost-effective solution to the incredible threat of climate change and create healthier, more resilient communities, ecosystems, and economies.

That is why we, the undersigned organizations, elected officials, and leaders call for expanded forest protection across the nation and an end to forest destruction and degradation:

- Expand permanently protected lands and protect public lands from commercial logging and other harmful activities
- End subsidies for false solutions such as industrial-scale bioenergy and genetically engineered trees, and halt conversion of natural forests to plantations
- Accurately and transparently account for and reduce emissions from the forestry sector and expand the US forest carbon sink as a major climate strategy
- Invest in forest protection as a resiliency and adaptation strategy for communities vulnerable to the effects of pollution and climate change
- Develop just economic transition strategies for communities dependent on an extractive forest economy, and provide more options for landowners and municipalities to keep forests standing and thriving



By endorsing the Stand4Forests platform, I

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Faith Leader

Candidate

Business Owner

Scientist

Other _____

OFFICE/AFFILIATION _____

TITLE _____

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