

Old Growth Campaign

Background

Rampant logging, mining and agricultural expansion have put the world's remaining forests in crisis. We've already lost four-fifths of our planet's old-growth forests. Every year, 50,000 forest species go extinct and millions of tons of carbon dioxide stored in healthy trees and forest soils are released into the atmosphere.

Rainforest Action Network's Old Growth Campaign is shining a spotlight on the companies that back outdated, destructive logging methods. We mobilize the power of public opinion to hold the corporate sector accountable to protecting our forests and our future.

Targeting Weyerhaeuser

Currently, the Old Growth Campaign is targeting Seattle-based Weyerhaeuser Corp., the largest lumber company in the world. Weyerhaeuser obtains a significant percentage of its wood from clear-cuts of Canada's boreal forest. More than 10 times the size of California, the boreal stretches across North America from Alaska to the Atlantic Ocean and forms part of a ring of forest that encircles the entire planet just below the Arctic tundra. It is also the largest terrestrial storehouse of organic carbon – a critical defense against global warming.

In northwestern Ontario's stretch of boreal forest, Weyerhaeuser owns and operates a major mill which obtains wood from the traditional territory of the Grassy Narrows First Nation. The clear-cut logging Weyerhaeuser supports interferes with the community's ability to engage in traditional activities such as hunting and trapping, which are guaranteed under Canada's Treaty 3. RAN has teamed with the Grassy Narrows community to demand that Weyerhaeuser respect their rights and stop logging their land without free, prior and informed consent.

RAN's Old Growth Campaign is pressuring Weyerhaeuser in three major ways:

- 1) We have repeatedly demanded that the company abide by the sustainable logging standards of the Forest Stewardship Council.
- 2) We have engaged in a corporate campaign against Weyerhaeuser subsidiaries Pardee and Quadrant Homes, which bill themselves as green builders even as they build homes with lumber clear-cut in Grassy Narrows.
- 3) We have successfully negotiated with paper-makers who buy wood pulp from Grassy Narrows to find better sources.

Brief History of the Campaign

Launched in 1992, the Old Growth Campaign's first major victory came in 1999, when it obtained a groundbreaking commitment from Home Depot to phase out the purchase of old-growth wood. Major brands throughout the forest products industry soon followed suit including companies like Lowe's, 84 Lumber, Centex, KB Home, and others.

The campaign then zeroed in on Boise Cascade, another major purchaser of old-growth wood. In 2004, Boise became the first major forest products company to establish a policy against old-growth logging within the United States. Kinko's, Burger King and dozens of other leading brands have also agreed to stop buying paper from old-growth forests in response to the efforts of the Old Growth Campaign.