



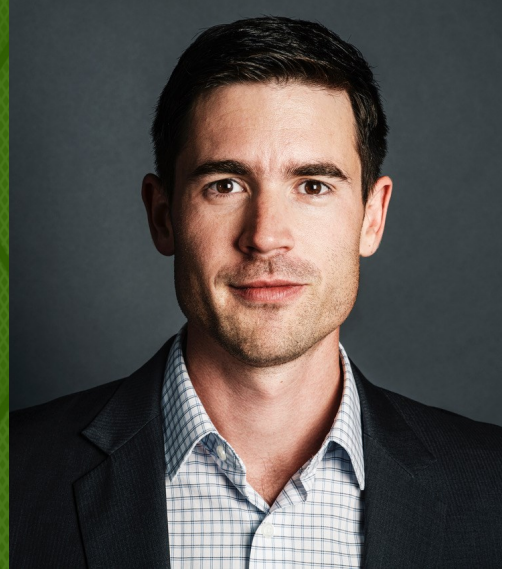
**PATRICK WEILER**

Member of Parliament

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Dear Friends & Neighbours,

Canada's old growth forests are iconic, irreplaceable, and immeasurably valuable for the habitat and the ecosystem services they provide. Old growth forests act as important carbon sinks, helping demonstrate how nature can be our best ally in fighting the climate crisis. Old growth forests hold important spiritual, biological, and cultural value for many First Nations who have stewarded this land since time immemorial.

Simply put: these sacred trees are worth more standing, yet they are threatened by continued, inherently unsustainable logging. That is why on May 3, I submitted a motion to direct the federal government to take a leadership role in ending the loss of old growth forests, and supporting the provincial government to do the same.

## Motion-83: Old Growth Forest Protection

Motion 83 Calls for:

1. Immediately and permanently ending all destruction of old growth forest on federal land,
2. Prioritizing the long-term protection of endangered old growth forest ecosystems through Canada's forthcoming Nature Agreement with BC, our climate plans, and in consultation with Indigenous Peoples
3. Launching the Government of Canada's \$82 million Old Growth Nature Fund before the end of 2023
4. Banning the export of old growth logs and wood products made from old growth trees, and
5. Supporting value added forestry industry initiatives in partnership with First Nations.

Currently, less than 8% of productive big treed old growth forests remain in British Columbia, and less than a third of all old growth forests have legal protection. It is vital that we increase this percentage, to protect the last intact old growth forests, and the irreplaceable ecosystem services they provide to animals and humans alike here in BC and across the country. Read more in this newsletter to learn about how my motion will work to achieve that.

### 1. ENDING ALL DESTRUCTION OF OLD GROWTH FOREST ON FEDERAL LAND

While the overwhelming majority of old growth forests are on provincial crown land and under provincial jurisdiction, the federal government can act to protect old growth in its territorial jurisdiction.

The first part of my motion calls for the immediate and permanent end of all destruction of old growth forests on federal land, except on Indigenous land which must be subject to consent with the respective First Nation.



Photo: Visiting old growth trees on the Sunshine Coast

## Tell the federal government to help save Canada's Old Growth!

If you believe that the Government of Canada should be taking a leadership role in Old Growth Forest Protection, please let me and our Ministers of Environment and Climate Change, Natural Resources, and International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development know.

Send me an e-mail at: [patrick.weiler@parl.gc.ca](mailto:patrick.weiler@parl.gc.ca)



## 2. PROTECTING OLD GROWTH THROUGH CONSERVATION COMMITMENTS

As we fight the climate crisis and meet our goal to reduce emissions by at least 40% by 2030 and reach net zero emissions by 2050, the Government of Canada has committed to protecting 25% of its lands by the year 2025, and 30% of lands by 2030 to support biodiversity. We know that nature and climate are intertwined, and you cannot solve the climate crisis without solving our biodiversity crisis.

The second part of my motion calls for prioritizing the funding of long-term protection of endangered old growth forest ecosystems as a key component of Canada’s conservation commitments, including through our upcoming Nature Agreement with the BC government and as part of Canada’s Emissions Reduction Plan.

## 3. LAUNCHING THE OLD GROWTH FUND BEFORE 2024

In 2021, we announced that Canada would establish a BC Old Growth Nature Fund and work with the provincial government and private donors to further support the protection of old growth forests. Budget 2022 set aside \$55 million for the fund, and through the work of the Standing Committee of Environment and Sustainable Development that I sit on, an additional \$26.9 million was added for a total of \$81.9 million. It’s time that this fund is launched.

My motion therefore calls for the launch of the Old Growth Nature Fund before the end of 2023.

## 4. BANNING EXPORT OF OLD GROWTH LOGS & WOOD PRODUCTS

One important way we can work to preserve old growth in Canada and internationally is to stop facilitating the export market for it.

My motion calls for a ban on the export of old growth logs and wood products made from old growth trees from and through Canada as swiftly as possible. We know though that this measure will require consultation with the Province of BC, and we must ensure that it is compliant with our World Trade Organization obligations. I therefore propose an end date for old growth exports no later than 2030, although this can and should be accomplished much sooner than that.



Photo credit: TJ Watt, Ancient Forest Alliance

## 5. SUPPORTING VALUE ADDED FORESTRY INDUSTRY INITIATIVES WITH FIRST NATIONS

We know that Canada’s forestry industry is an important part of Canada’s economy, particularly in much of rural British Columbia where it is a significant employer. As we work to preserve Canada’s old growth forests, efforts will be needed to make forestry both sustainable and regenerative. First Nations can and must be valued partners in this work. Our government already supports value addition in forestry through the Forest Industry Transformation Program, Forest Innovation Program, Indigenous Forestry Initiative, and the Green Construction through Wood program, as well as an investment of \$368.4 million in Budget 2023.

The final part of my motion calls for continued support for value added forestry industry initiatives in partnership with First Nations, aimed at ensuring that Canada can have a sustainable and vibrant forestry industry based on the harvesting of second and third growth forests.