

Why End

Clearcutting?



- **Clearcutting is not sustainable**

Clearcutting is not certified as sustainable by the Forest Stewardship Council.

- **Clearcutting destroys old growth**

Clearcutting has destroyed old growth forest, which provide habitat for a diversity of wildlife.

- **Clearcutting pollutes water**

Clearcutting leads to increased runoff that erodes and degrades watersheds, polluting clean water.

- **Clearcutting leads to disease**

The most heavily clearcut areas also have the heaviest dwarf mistletoe infestations.

- **Clearcutting does not mimic fire**

Natural fires lead to large openings and large areas of old growth forest, while clearcutting leads to highly fragmented forest with little old growth. Clearcutting removes whole tree trunks, leaving behind small branches. Fire removes branches and fine fuels, while leaving tree trunks to serve as habitat for wildlife.

- **Clearcutting removes soil nutrients**

While forest fires enrich soils with nutrient-rich ash, a natural fertilizer that enhances plant growth, with clearcutting most nutrients are carted away to the lumber mill.

- **Clearcutting increases fire risk**

Clearcutting leaves behind fine tinder, while removing tree trunks that are better protected from forest fires. Fires travel across clearcuts as easily as through dense forest.

- **Clearcutting hurts big game**

In a study on the Medicine Bow National Forest, elk showed a strong preference for burned areas, but showed no preference for clearcuts. Areas in the center of clearcuts are avoided by game animals.

Sustainable Alternatives Exist

Alternative harvest methods, including group and individual tree selection harvesting, can and have been used on the Medicine Bow National Forest and other forests. These alternatives are certified as sustainable and can protect forest health.



An area logged using selective harvest methods in the Medicine Bow.