

ORIGINAL DRAWINGS BY
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Dear Friends,

I am writing to you with a love for the forest so deep in my heart that it hurts. It hurts because I am angry. Right now, there are over 20,000 acres of mature forest on the Forest Service chopping block. At a time when the need for climate action is urgent, we have an amazing opportunity to prioritize the preservation of our mature and old-growth forests. These forests represent one of the most accessible and affordable carbon sequestration “technologies” available.

And yet the Forest Service is doing the opposite, proposing to clear-cut more acres in Kentucky than ever before. A new logging proposal just released for the Jellico mountains is the largest we’ve ever seen; it would approve 10,000 acres of logging OVER THE NEXT 40 YEARS! Can you imagine what the world will be like in 2060?

I know one thing for sure: We will need our forests intact!

We aren’t just up against logging. We are also up against deceptive greenwashing practices that make logging sound like it is the only way to help the forest and preserve biodiversity. We must hold the Forest Service accountable and ensure that our forests are truly protected. **Kentucky Heartwood is the only organization in the state doing this work – and we’ve been doing it for 30 years.**

Meanwhile, the logging industry and pro-logging “wildlife” groups like the *Ruffed Grouse Society*, *Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation*, and *National Wild Turkey Federation*, are working behind the scenes with the Forest Service to cut and sell increasingly large sections of the Daniel Boone National Forest. Under the guise of “habitat management” and the need for more “young forests,” these groups have partnered with the U.S. Forest Service to enact “Stewardship Agreements.” In some cases, like the Little Flat Creek sale in South Red Bird, these stewardship agreements enable the Forest Service to give the timber to the Ruffed Grouse Society in exchange for managing the project and cutting the trees.

WE BELIEVE STEWARDSHIP SHOULD MEAN PRIORITIZING ENDANGERED ECOSYSTEMS AND THE RECOVERY OF OLD-GROWTH FORESTS.

Rather than managing our public forests as feedstock for the wood products industry, Kentucky Heartwood advocates for the ecological health of the ecosystem. Oftentimes that means leaving the forest alone. Sometimes that means supporting natural and historical processes like prescribed fire, or active work to remove invasive species. That is why we look to the **latest scientific research** (and conduct our own) to inform our advocacy.

We do this work with pennies compared to the millions that logging interests bring to the table, and we are very effective at what we do. Over our 30-year history we have prevented logging on thousands of acres of national forest, stopping numerous bad Forest Service projects and engaging in precedent-setting lawsuits. **BUT WE NEED TO DO MORE.**

Through the generous support of our donors, we continue to grow our organization and take major steps toward protecting our public lands.

THIS YEAR WE:

- Expanded our staff, adding an Ecosystem Defense Coordinator and Communications and Outreach Coordinator.
- Filed a major lawsuit to stop the South Red Bird project to protect endangered species and old-growth forests.
- Conducted ground truthing efforts and hosted field trips documenting problems with stream restoration projects near Cave Run Lake.
- Launched a major outreach campaign to respond to the new logging proposal in the Jellico mountains.
- Hosted several field trips for the public to see endangered forests first-hand.
- Held our 16th Annual Music Festival - our most successful to date!

CALL TO ACTION!

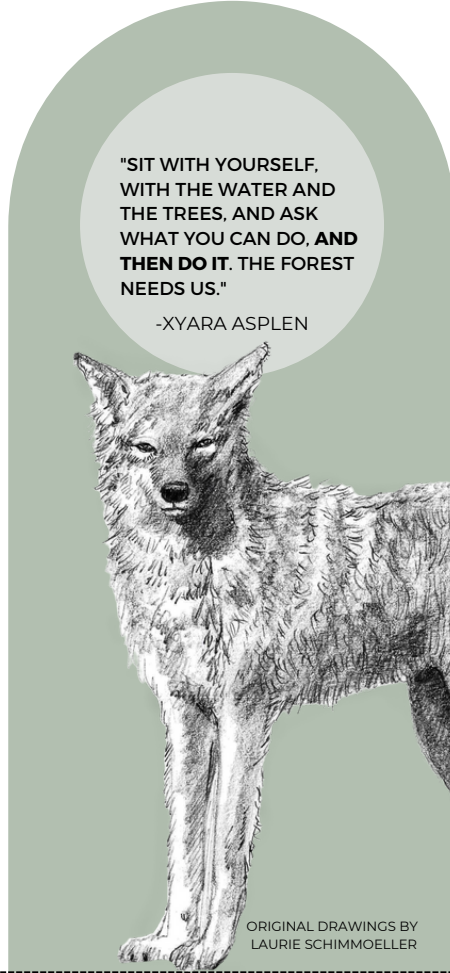
This is a call to action. **As our climate rapidly changes, we need to protect all of the mature forests that we can.** While most forests in Kentucky are privately owned and subject to the economic realities that turn trees into dollars, our shared public lands provide one of the last places where forests can be sheltered from economic demands. Every single one of us can help.

- **Donate.** Whether you can give \$1 or \$10,000, we are asking everyone to contribute in proportion to what you can afford. If you haven't donated yet this year, please consider it. If you have donated, thank you! Might you give again?
- **Give your time.** The biggest volunteer need that we have right now is for board members. If you're interested in learning more about board responsibilities, please get in touch with me!
- **Share** our posts on social media! We know the Forest Service is watching our posts, and the more you share, the more they see public support for our work.
- **Join** us on outings. Explore new areas of the forest!
- Share our **mission** with your friends and family.

Now is the time for us to invest in ourselves, in our mission, and in the future of our planet. We will continue to lead with **love**.

For the Forest!

Lauren Kallmeyer - Executive Director



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