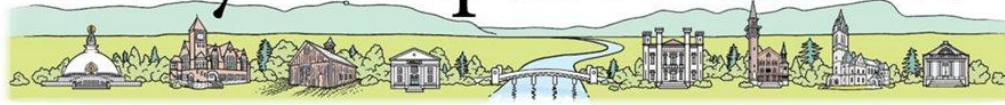


Daily Hampshire Gazette



Elisa Campbell: Support scientific forest management Massachusetts

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I was glad to see the recent guest column by Joseph Larson supporting scientific forest management in Massachusetts. (“Why scientific forest management is crucial,” Dec. 30)

The rules governing forest management in Massachusetts are among the best in the world. It is much better for forest products to be created in Massachusetts than in most other regions; certainly far better than in the places where forests are being actively destroyed, largely for markets in rich countries like our own.

We are currently exploiting the forests of poor countries to sustain our levels of consumption without having to witness the destruction directly. Reducing forest management in Massachusetts would make this situation worse.

The most significant threat to our forests is development. Most of our forests are privately owned, and the owners often need to receive some income from their forests to pay for family expenses, taxes, or to cover the cost of removing invasive plants.

If there is no financial value in land as forest, the incentive to develop intensifies. The forestry practiced on our public lands contributes to the continued existence of a forest products industry, as well as demonstrating good forestry practices.

Research has shown that while the most carbon is stored in an older forest, the rate of carbon sequestration is highest in middle-aged forests (growing trees with diameters between 4 and 16 inches). The carbon stored in midsized and larger trees that are harvested is not returned to the air; the wood is made into long-lasting products and the carbon continues to be stored. Smaller trees in those areas then have more resources so they can grow faster, absorbing more carbon dioxide.

Forest management also creates habitat for species that need a variety of forest and vegetation types, as mentioned in the column.

For these and other reasons, I support scientific forest management in Massachusetts.

Source: <https://www.gazettenet.com/Campbell-letter-31826464>