

## Lou Mansolillo

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**From:** Sarah Adloo <sarah@oldgrowthforest.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 3, 2024 3:19 PM  
**To:** House Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
**Subject:** Written testimony re:H7293 Old-Growth Forest Protection Act

April 3, 2024

House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
State of Rhode Island General Assembly  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

### Re: **In support of H7293, the Old-Growth Forest Protection Act**

Members of the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources,

Please know that the thousands of supporters of the Old-Growth Forest Network (OGFN) strongly **support the passage of H7293**, the Old-Growth Forest Protection Act, which would prohibit extractive logging of old-growth forests on state and municipal owned land, require that inventories be conducted to identify possible old-growth areas prior to logging operations, and help restart the Rhode Island Natural Heritage program.

This legislation would make old-growth forests and rare forest ecosystems a priority in Rhode Island, as less than 1% of the state's forests exceed 100 years old.

The Old-Growth Forest Network is the first national organization working specifically to preserve and create old-growth forests for the enjoyment of present and future generations. In counties capable of supporting forest growth we identify at least one forest that will be forever protected from logging and open to the public. Then we help families connect with these forests. The result will be a national network of treasured forests where all generations can experience native biodiversity and the beauty of nature. We are called to do this work because so few old forests remain.

Yet old forests are so important because:

- The older a forest is, the better it can improve air and water quality.
- The older a forest is, the more different species will be found there, from birds to snails to ferns. There is much biodiversity than can *only* live in old-growth forests.
- The older a forest is, the more attractive it is for ecotourism.
- The older a forest is, the more carbon it stores and the more critical its protection in the age of the climate crisis.

We need to save examples of older forests to understand and appreciate and safeguard our native ecosystem. Public lands need to lead the example for protecting these rare ecosystems for the benefit of all citizens of Rhode Island.

The 2024 Old-Growth Forest Protection Act would accomplish the critically important goals necessary to preserve and restore the dwindling natural forest areas throughout Rhode Island. **We ask the Committee to vote in favor of this important legislation** which if passed could put Rhode Island ahead of the nation in the preservation of old-growth forests.

Thank you for making the right choice for our forests and for the future generations.

Sincerely,



Sarah Adloo  
Executive Director



Sarah RobbGrieco  
Northeast Regional Manager