



Old-Growth Forests Keep Us Alive and Healthy

Four broad categories of ecosystem services to humans are widely recognized:

Supporting services underlie all the other services. Examples are:

- Soil building (decaying leaves & logs)
- Water cycling (transpiration, clean runoff)
- Nutrient cycling (nitrogen, trace minerals)
- Carbon sequestration (removing & storing CO₂)

Provisioning services, such as:

- Fresh water
- Clean, oxygenated air
- Habitats for native flora & fauna
- Medicinals (ginseng, yellow-root, etc.)
- Food (mushrooms, berries, venison, etc.)

Regulating services, like:

- Stabilizing climate
- Supporting pollinators
- Mitigating temperature extremes
- Decreasing floods, preventing soil erosion

Cultural services include:

- Spiritual renewal
- Aesthetic and intellectual enjoyment
- Scientific research reference conditions
- Recreation (hiking, biking, hunting, birding)

From: The 2005 *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment* of the World Resources Institute.

