

Forest for the Trees, #1



Olympic Peninsula voices grieving the Penny Wise clearcut, and continuing the fight to protect the forests we live, play, and breathe in.

Welcome to Forest for the Trees, a memorial built of poems, essays, and art, to honor and remember lost Forest* along the Olympic Peninsula. In this issue, we grieve a Forest we know intimately: a special place, first called qʷəlsid by the Twana People, who have known, loved, and nurtured this Land since Time Immemorial.

A section of qʷəlsid, also known as the Woods near Penny Creek, was renamed the "Penny Wise Timber Sale" by the WA Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in Summer 2022, for the purposes of selling the timber upon it. All other Living Creatures, Branches, Roots, Mycelium, Water and Minerals, were not considered worthy of mention or protection, as only what can be commodified and carted away counts in DNR's management of our natural resources. "Penny wise is pound foolish", as the saying goes, so it should stand as no surprise that we lost much more than timber.

Visiting this Forest near present-day Quilcene is a journey through decades of deforestation. If you drive to Unit 7 of the so-called "Penny Wise Timber Sale," an Ancestor Forest about 120 years old (or what remains of it), you will travel through plots logged 5, 10, 20, and 40 years ago. You will see the Future imagined by DNR – tidy rows of Douglas Fir, monocropped Tree farms planted in a graveyard of Cedar, Maple, and a hundred other species.

Notch Pass trail emerges near here, a historic route used by Native American traders who moved through this area, now frequented by backpackers who travel for pleasure, not survival.

*We follow the lead of Quileute artist and author Howard Hansen 'cKullell' in challenging the rules of capitalization. Howard observed how the English language divides us from our Plant and Animal kin.

Howard identifies Forest as People, writing, "It should be said that 'what is', for us, out there, is still as in 'those days', River is still River, a condition of Great Spirit creation we call by its name, with capital as in any other created thing with first name: Island is Island, Beach is Beach... creations of Great Spirit, thus the recognition of its uniqueness, therefore name of importance."

How do we trade now? The supermarket, the bank, the commodity market, the labor market. Where our Labor, Earth's Labor, Forest herself, are measured in dollars alone. Decisions are made by the Powers that Be. Tree Trunks removed and scraped naked of Branches, Moss, Birds, Insect, Life. Shipped across dirt roads and highways to ports, boats and foreign factories, as well as local mills, Forest becomes knockdown furniture, floor veneer, framing, and plywood. Forest dies to make too-many objects for our too-large



3 homes. Yet still there is never enough Shelter to keep Humans off the street. Left behind is a graveyard of Branches and Roots, Earth compacted and destabilized, Mycelium disrupted, Water run-off, sterile Soil into which will be planted not Forest, but commodity farm. Why? We sacrifice Living Forest for money, profit, GDP, trade, and commerce. Yet we still struggle to survive without a living wage for all our efforts to keep the machine alive.

The Powers that Were figured out how to manufacture consent for this system way back in 1889. Policy-makers of yore tied the cutting of Forest in public land to basic provisions for Human Children: the building of schools, childcare centers, and fire district funding. Their legacy pits Forest, Youth, and Shelter against each other, reversing the way Humans lived since Time Immemorial. Once Living Forest provided Shelter, educated and provided for Youth. But our systems of colonial capitalism separated People from the care of the Forest. Divide and Conquer is how we do it in Washington State. This is why and how we cut down our Ancestors.

When we, the loose collective of writers and artists that makes the Forest for the Trees, learned that this piece of Forest was threatened, "Penny Wise" was already auctioned, scheduled to be cut and removed. The fight was already lost. While we stirred the cauldron of conversation and rumor (could we save it? how? who? when?) the timber company Sierra Pacific Industries worked with DNR to accelerate the cutting timeline. DNR was happy to approve cutting and road-building in the rainy season, Salmon and Water be damned. While we ate last year's holiday suppers and nursed COVID hangovers, Sierra Pacific Industries made roads, leveled Forest, logged, and left us reeling.

This zine is a record of our Grief.

What is Grief? So many things to so many people.

What is Grief to you?

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What is Grief? It is what this zine sets out to explore.

We need space for Grief. Space for Heart, Emotion, Love, and Sorrow. Some push for action after action, for more and stronger resistance, and YES, we do need that. This is a battle for Earth, for Humanity, for All Our Relations, and for the Future. And yet, the push for action can drain our own life resources, burning out our comrades. The voice that says there is not enough time to pause and reflect, is reflective of the same extractive capitalist colonial systems we are fighting against.

In the words of poet Audre Lorde, "For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us to temporarily beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change."

To decolonize, to repair our Earth, to heal our culture, to nurture each other, we must make space for Grief, for Ritual, for Love, for Witnessing, for Imagination, for Joy, and for Sorrow.

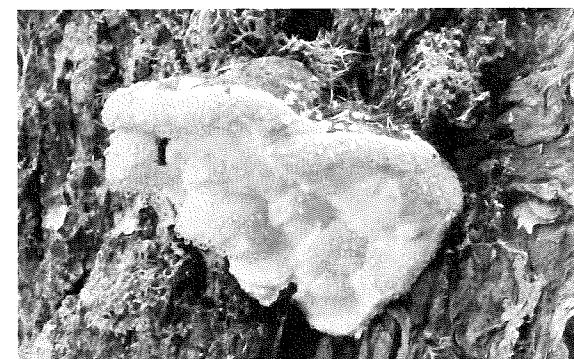


Photo: Lyn De Danaan, PhD.

With that, we welcome you to the first issue of The Forest for the Trees, a zine of and from the Olympic Peninsula, a work-in-progress of

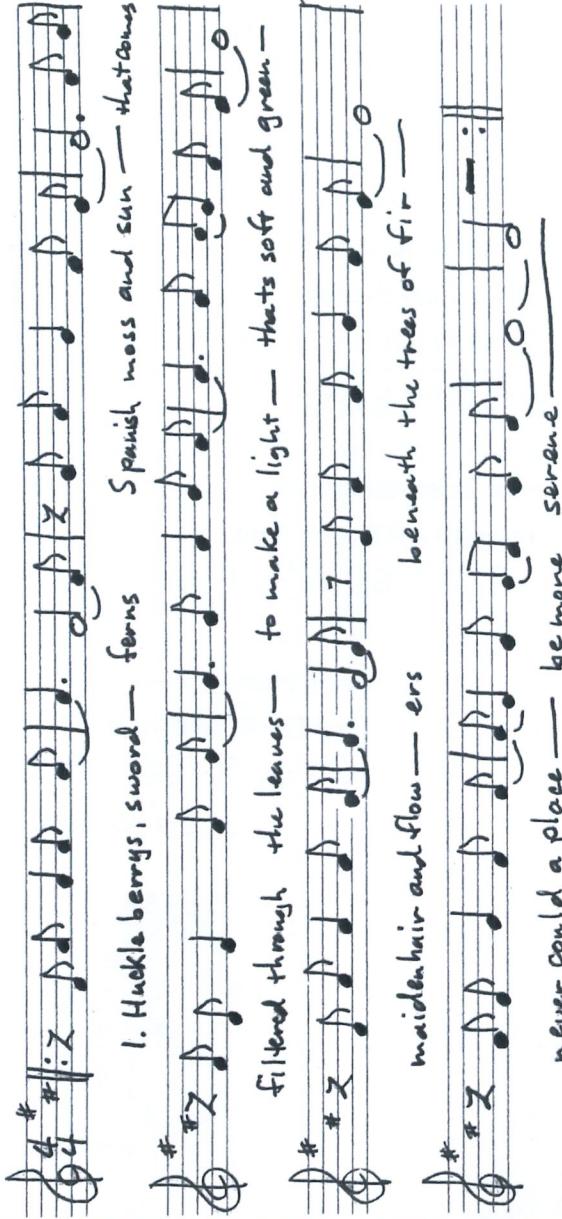
poetry, art and story, which we invite you to be a part of. May this be a safe place for you to read, to breathe, to grieve, and to remember.

The Forest

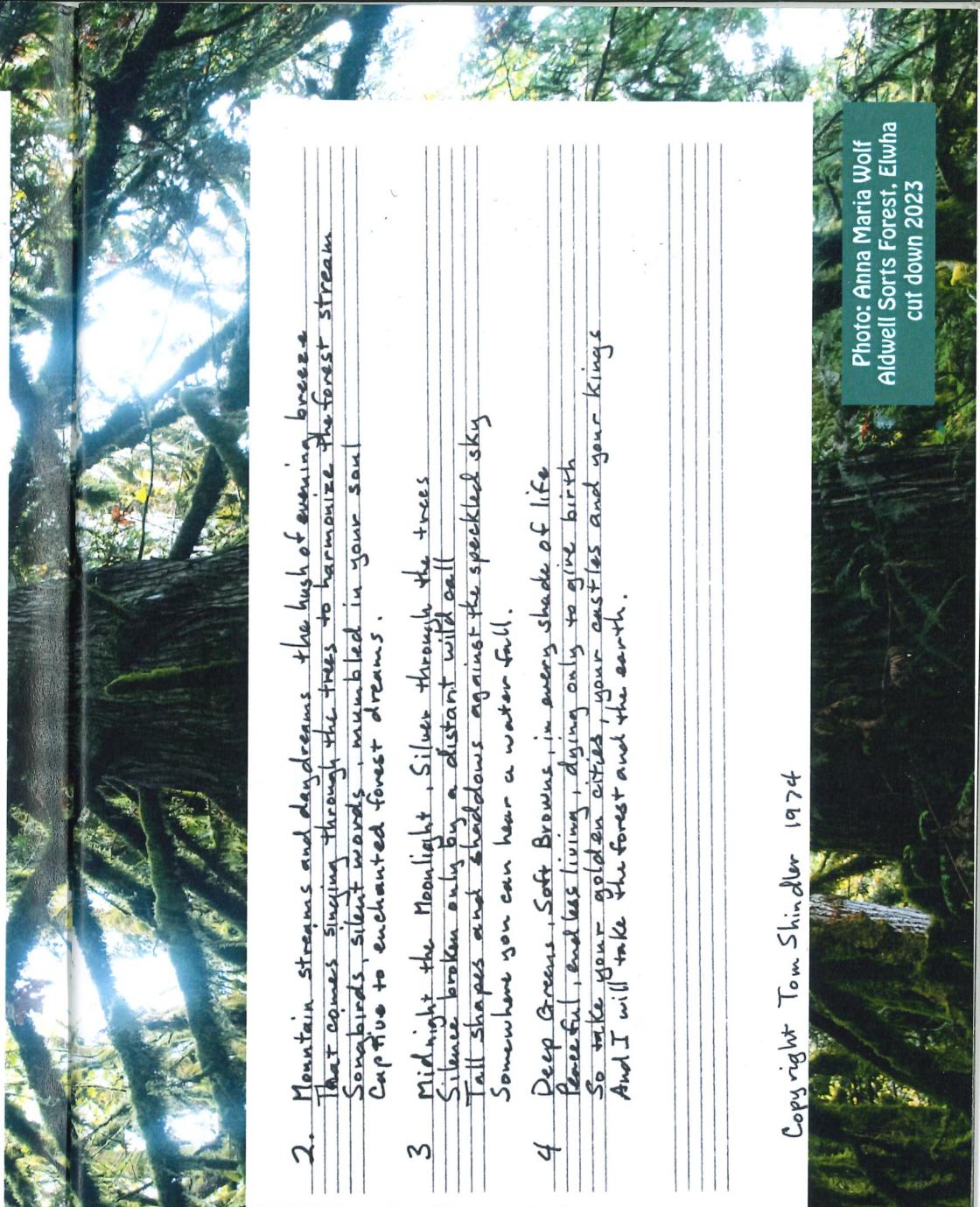
by Tom Shindler

"After all, the song was given to me by the Hoh Rain Forest,
so I'm just passing it on..." — Tom Shindler

More songs about our natural world at tomssongslive.com.



1. Huckle berries, sword — ferns Spanish moss and sun — that comes filtered through the leaves — to make a light — that's soft and green — maiden hair and flow — ers beneath the trees of fir — never could a place — be more serene —



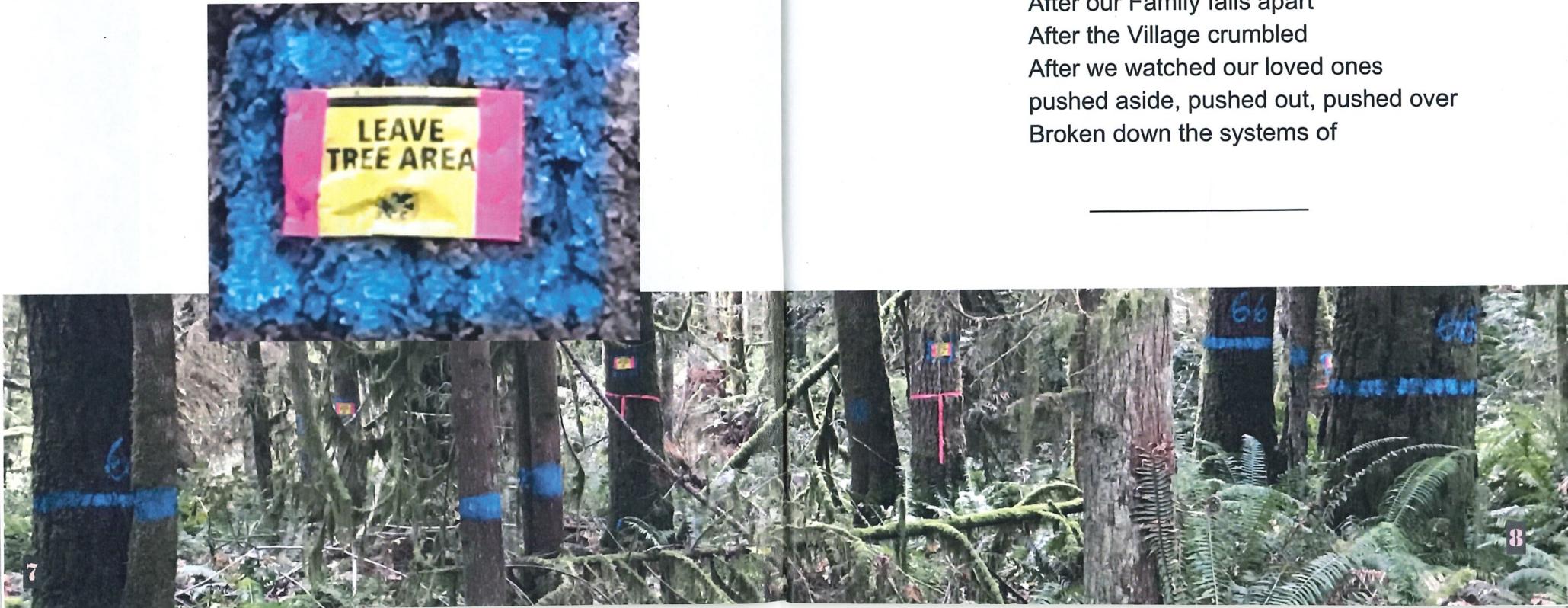
Copyright Tom Shindler 1974

Photo: Anna Maria Wolf
Aldwell Spur's Forest, Elwha
cut down 2023

LEAVE TREE

Leave Tree {they say}
is the name given to a Tree Person left behind
in a clearcut
which is not a clearcut
because some Trees still stand
A few Cedar Hemlock Fir and Spruce People
still stand

by danielle fodor



separate from Mycelium
separate from Family of Huckleberry, Salal,
Maple, Currant, Devils Claw, Moss.

Soil crushed, Insects exposed,
Poisoned with petroleum pesticides
herbicides trash exhaust heavy traffic.

but look {they say} we left some trees.
it's not a clearcut. Hooray.

Leave Trees like Leave People

Some of us still stand up
After our Family falls apart
After the Village crumbled
After we watched our loved ones
pushed aside, pushed out, pushed over
Broken down the systems of

otherwise known as
not enough money
not enough housing
not enough intact culture
not enough land
not enough food
not enough jobs
not enough intact family
not enough friends
not enough safety
not enough love

otherwise known as
too much abuse
too much fear
too much instability
too much moving
too much meth
too much alcohol
too much cheap food
too much poverty
too much violence
too much hurting
too much grief

Some of us still stand, though our branches are broken,
our roots severed,
our trunks exposed to
too much sun
too much wind
too much heat
too much cold

things that used to seem fun, now not so much
a strong wind could blow us over.
everything is too much when your Forest is gone
when you are only one Tree





left behind

on the vast expanse.

Stand tall {they say}
You're the lucky ones!

Resilient.

Survivors.

Roots and branches hobbled,
Forever changed.





I am grateful to teachers: my friend Sarah Mandel, the beloved Pema Chodron and Dalai Lama, from whom I have learned this ancient practice.

Tonglen is a Tibetan Buddhist practice, but I believe it is older than Buddhism, as old as fungus and photosynthesis itself. Fungus takes in waste and crap and dead things, and gives back nutrients, clean water, and soil. The trees take in carbon dioxide and the raw burning power of the sun, and give back oxygen, shade, food, and shelter. So give thanks to the fungus, the microbes, our plant, animal, and fungal kin, who taught us these ways through example.

TONGLEN FOR THE FOREST *or how I practice staying*

by danielle fodor

It is difficult to stay with the forest when I want to run away. Difficult to stay with chainsaws cutting, the machinery of death and profit, the smell of petroleum and fresh cut cedar, new roads slashed across the landscape. Difficult when I didn't know Penny Wise until her trees had already been sold – difficult to see the timber company saw nothing else of value there, nothing to preserve: native plants, ancient stumps, fungus, insects, microbes, soil whole and alive.

Difficult to stay when humans can't get along, arguments between DNR and the county, within the environmental establishment, within my own group of queer punk anarchist freaks. Difficult when I can't say what is truth, what happened when, when I don't know how to support humans, forest, and soil I care for.



Difficult to return when I know the forest first I visited is no longer. Her oldest largest trees, our ancestors, have been cut down and hauled away, while I was celebrating holidays. Difficult for me to think about it, to want to go there. Difficult because I am not a warrior, a tree-sitter, a frequenter of county board meetings. Difficult because I feel my own guilt and complicity, because I looked away.

I have been studying Buddhism for several years, half-heartedly. Meditation does not come easily to me. I am not able to sit in a rigid posture without aggravating an old back injury, or meditate in recline without dozing off. It is hard for me to find quiet time. I am not devout at anything, not a joiner of organizations or faiths. I left dogma at the altar of the Catholic Church I attended as a child.

But I find the practices in Buddhism helpful, so I study and revisit them. Tonglen is especially helpful because it focuses on empathy and compassion, practicing the muscle of staying.

How can we connect to each other's pain, but not be swept away by it? Witness without shifting focus? Without trying to fix what cannot be fixed? Staying centered in myself, I strengthen my own capacity to be solid in the face of destruction, grief, injustice, and fear.

When I want to run away from climate justice work, the forest defense movement, from witnessing Penny Wise, the clearcuts

along the road, the destruction of our human and creature kin worldwide, I use Tonglen to calm, to focus, to center, to return to love, and to carry on.

May it be helpful to you, too.

Tonglen is simple.

You start with the breath, focusing on the rhythm of air moving in and out of your body.

Breathe in, Breathe out.

Then you use the breath as a rhythm to connect, witness, and express loving kindness to the creatures in need. On the in-breath, visualize your breath creating a powerful wind that pulls suffering and pain from the forest. It may help to see it as a grey smoke that the breath pulls from the forest, that breaks apart, dissipating into nothing. On the outbreath, send love and visualize what healing looks and feels like. With the breath, imagine the forest regenerating and the relationship between humans and the earth healing.

~ ~ ~

Breathe in, Breathe out.

Breathe in the exposed raw earth, Breathe out regrowth, soil rebuilding.

Breathe in the pain of the forest, Breathe out the land healing itself.

Breathe in the towering ancestor trees, cut down.

Breathe out the roots regenerating, regrowing from the wisdom of the ancestors, underground.

Breathe in the fresh stumps on the land, the horizontal forest that remains, traveling down highways.

Breathe out, the ancestors watching over us, the seeds in the soil sprouting.

Breathe in, all the tiny insects exposed to light and heat and rain, dying in shock.

Breathe out, may you find shelter. May your eggs repopulate your species.

Breathe in, workers cut down trees, hard physical labor to survive. The damage between them and the earth they also love and depend on.

Breathe out, workers safe at home, whole, well, surrounded by love. Walking in the forest, expressing love to creatures.

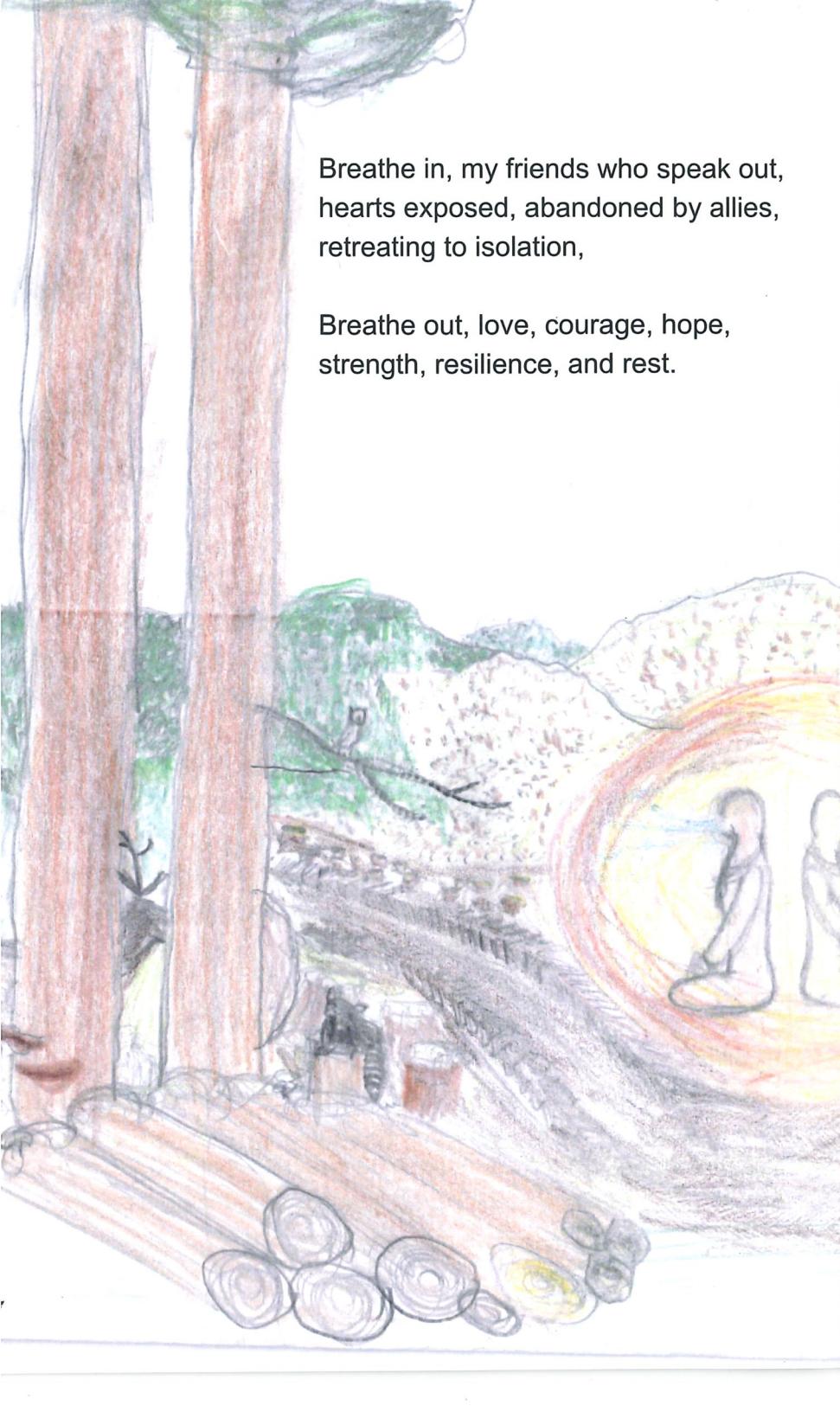
Breathe in, the soil, disturbed, trampled, poisoned with sprays, Breathe out, may you be left alone to regenerate as only you know how.

Breathe in, my friends who speak out, hearts exposed, abandoned by allies, retreating to isolation,

Breathe out, love, courage, hope, strength, resilience, and rest.

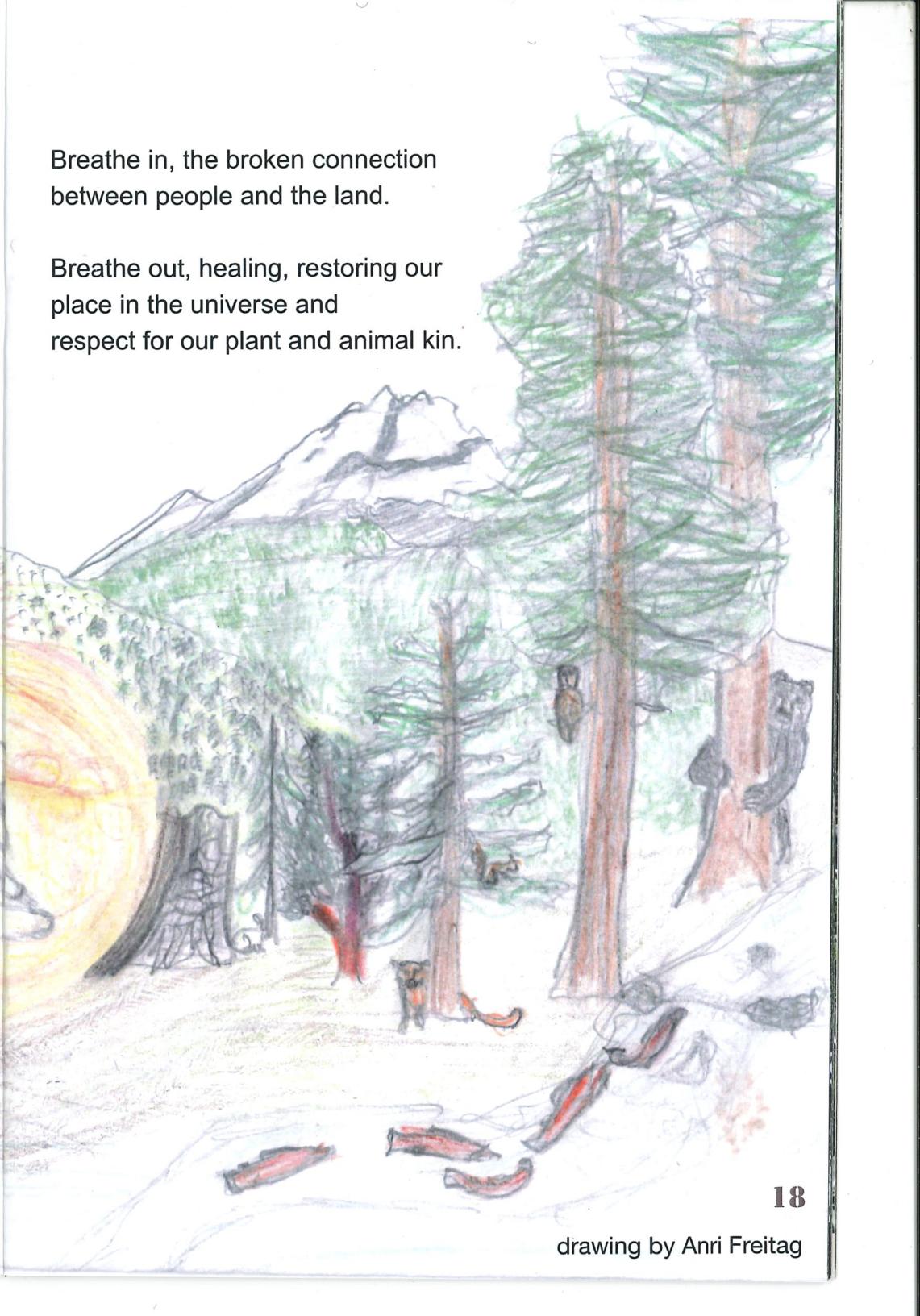
Breathe in, the broken connection between people and the land.

Breathe out, healing, restoring our place in the universe and respect for our plant and animal kin.



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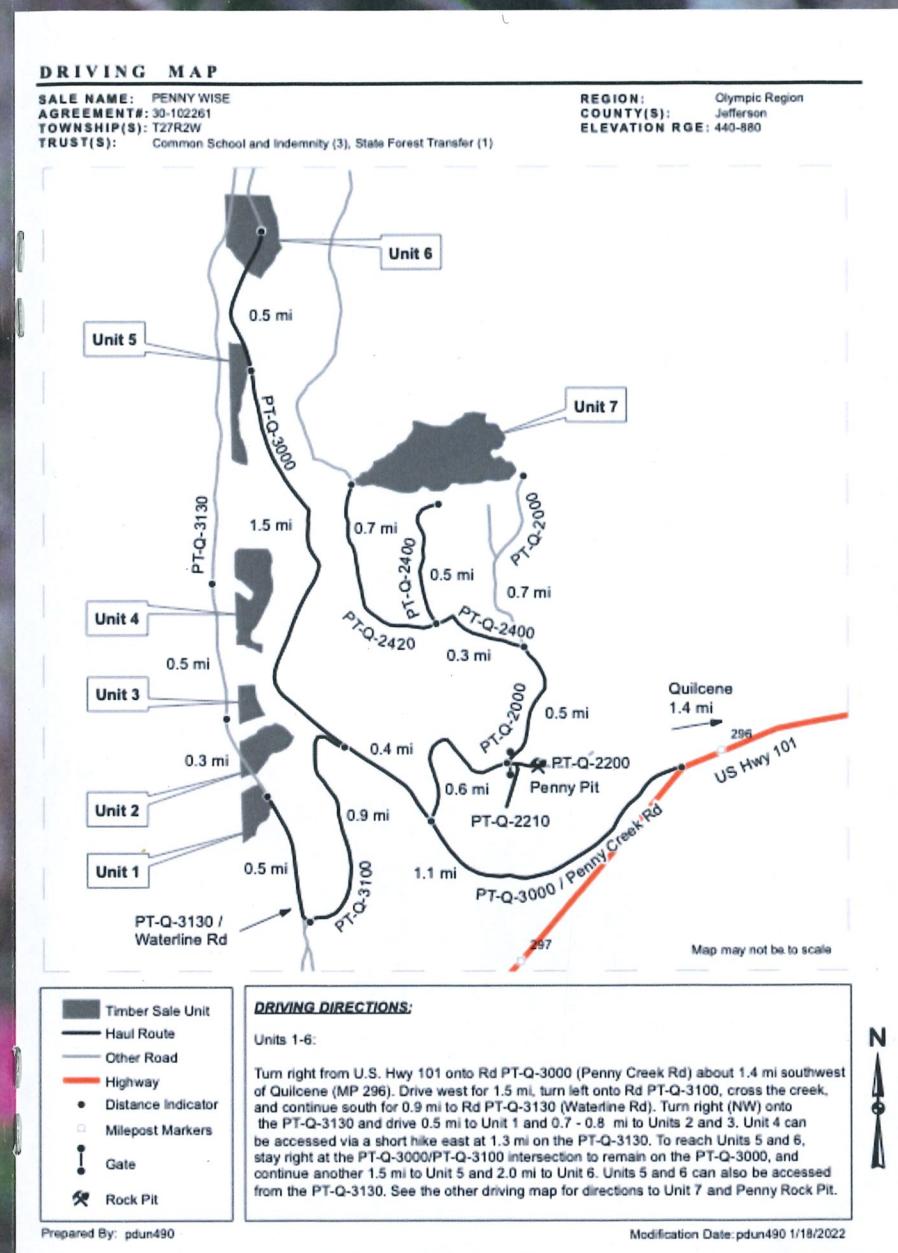
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Photo: Llyn De Danaan, Ph.D.



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“And still fresh in memory is Forest. Awesome, (silent to who couldn't hear it talking), inspiring in its eternity. Before 'misery whips', (lengthy long-toothed saws which ate in short order what MOTHER EARTH had developed carefully, then nursed for tens of thousands of years) there were Fog and Rain-pulling Hemlock and Sitka Spruce, all a noise-muffling barrier between CKwahleh* and East, the Hoquat Hoquat world. Cedar grew tall and straight and offered self to be CKeynoo to who prayed at Cedar swamps for one to offer itself for that life. No Cedar anymore.”

~Howard Hansen

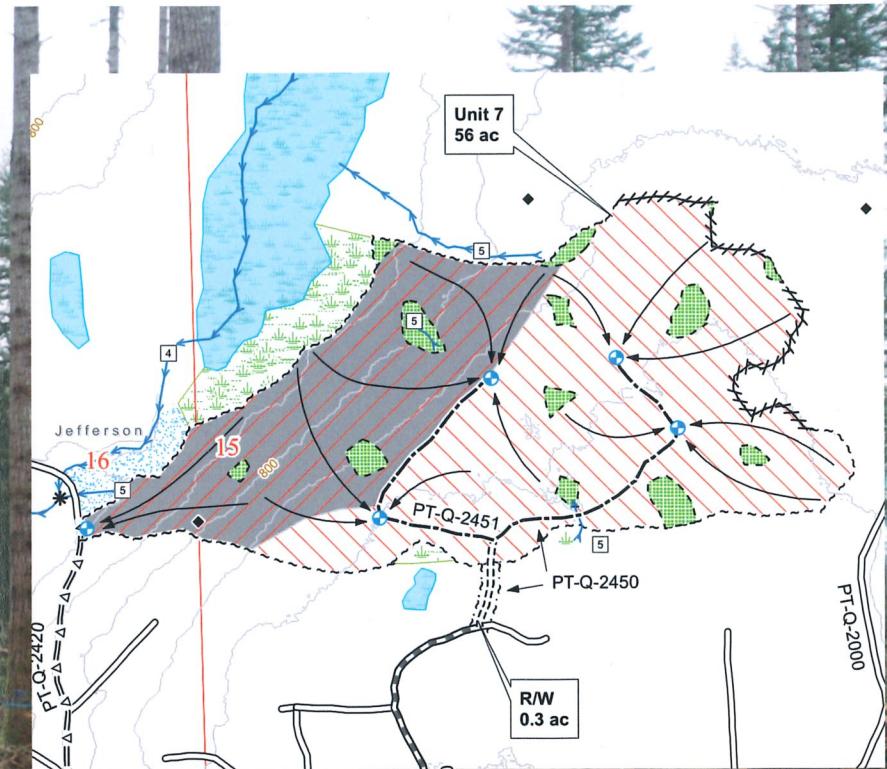
* cKwahleh - Ocean
Hoquat – White

3D

- +



"All Living things are People of one form or another."
– Howard Hansen



What is aliveness, if you, dear snag, are thought to be dead?
Have I conflated aliveness with purpose?

You inspire me to imagine,
even as my body dies,
there is hope
still..
For me
to become a vessel for symbiotic connection...
a place of
inoculation
and
ecosystemic support.

How is it for you to be one who has died,
yet still have purpose?

Humbly offering shelter and food
and sourcing life
within your forested village?

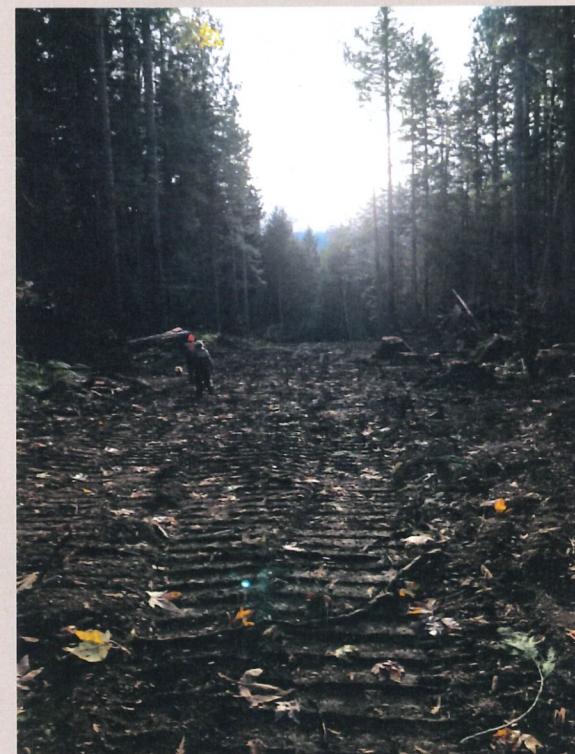
If I am to curl up inside your hollowed cavern,
I shall not wish to leave.
I know that in the comfort of your moist, flaky bark,
I would be transported back to when
I stood
as a tall tree myself.

My sharp, salty tears of remembering
slide between the channels of your rhytidome
where only microscopic insects
and
verdant green moss dare venture.

... And me.

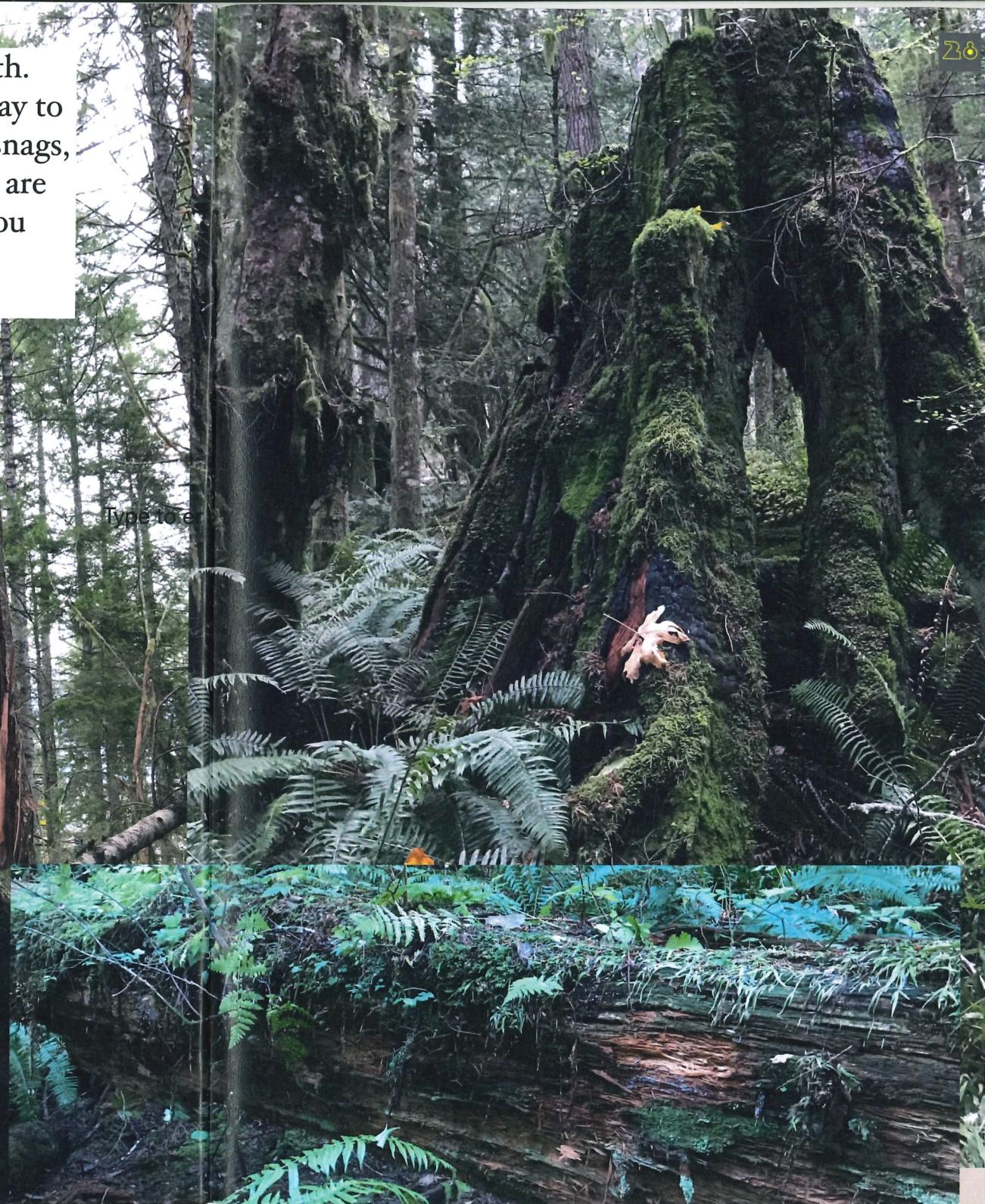
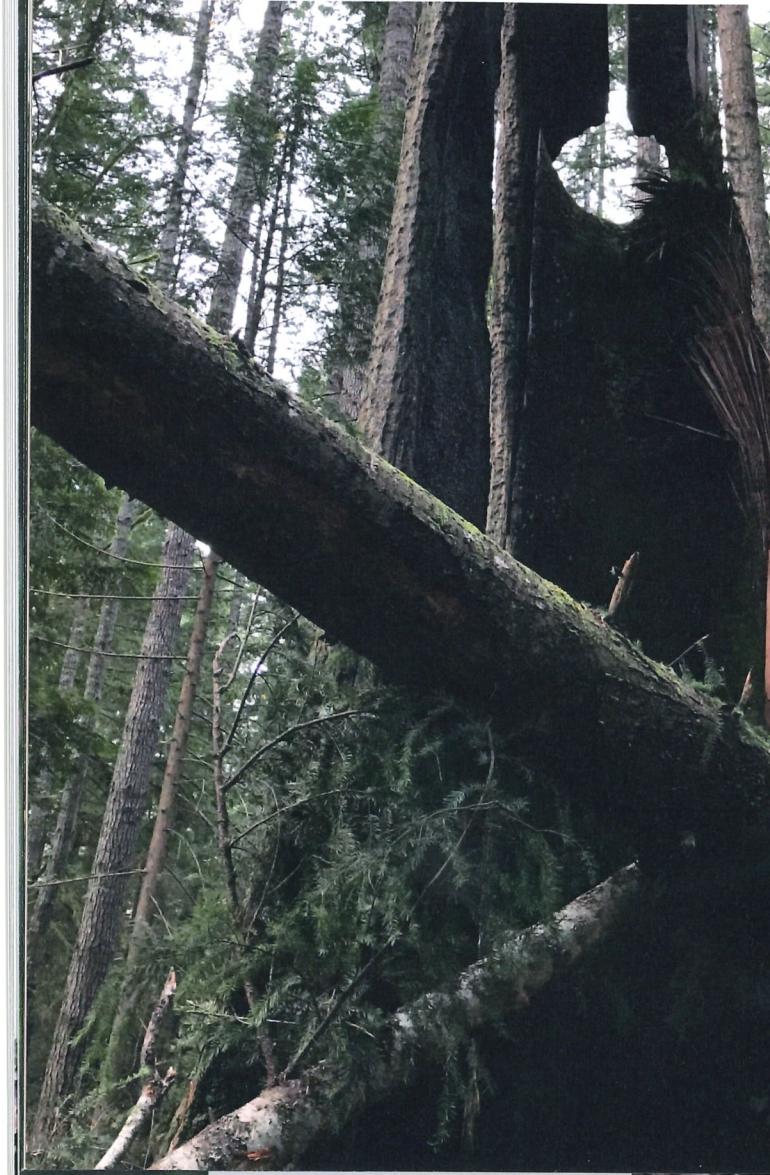
I am willing to venture, too.
Willing to remember and willing to meet you.
Willing to dance with your nuanced and under-noticed body.
Willing to bring you libations and the gift of my attentive gaze.
Willing to try this interspecies tango that is inherently ours to have
but is threatened by human-imposed degradation everyday.
I am willing to get close despite the promise of heartbreak that
looms...

For what else is love if not
a commitment to be cracked wide open everyday?

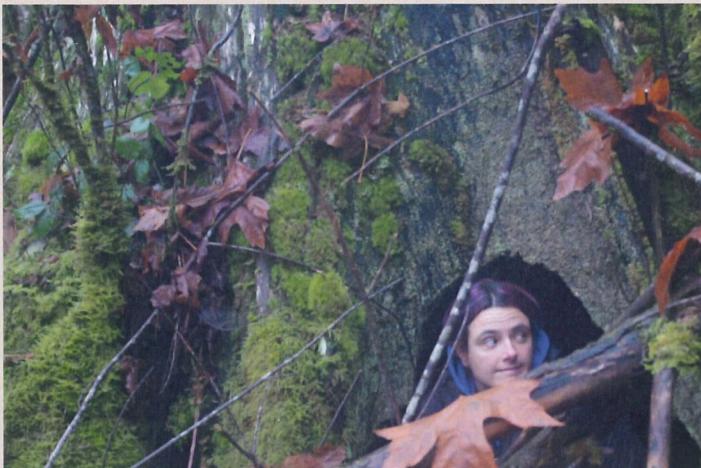


Snag,
by Swerv Wizely

Everything we have comes from death.
Nurse trees, cavernous holdings, decay to
nutrience. Take time to be with the snags,
fecund quiet and slow rebirth. What are
you receiving from loss? What will you
give, and **What will these next
chapters look like?**



RSVP to a
Snag,
by Fern



Lightning hollowed you out
death becoming you, the conductor, the container from
the inside out, allowing yourself
to hollow

Offering the driest part of yourself,
the almost-dead part of you—soft, crumbling,
becoming
fuel from the inside out.

From there, you held us
inside. Time was Depression Time— You can stay here as
long as you would like. Feed on muffled Time here—big maple
leaves, squirrels, everything happening through this cavernous
veil.

Everything is emptied, in here Everything is hollowed
Everything is remembered I can remember nothing

Take a break from memory— allowing ourselves, you allowing
me,
inside you, inside an off-button with no future, all past

You gift me moment. I press a complete pause,
to name my breath

With this space, everything is
empty nothing here nothing resists
my breathing

I'm inside the lungs you've made
The container you left behind
Burned xylem holds all of us.

In the fire, your words
slowed. You quieted
yourself. I heard not re-
remembering.
I look to the edges of your
toes. I emerge, the
blackness started to
become itself into dross,
my toes shoveling your
toes. Being is turning,
turning is being, a little bit
at a time, of me, of you

I stay, to bring
eternity with me into
moving time. An eye
looking out from the
cavern, your charred body
a sanctum— a knife of
space, careening like the
lightning that split you
open. A portal, a slit in
separation. Re-entering
through more space.



Maybe I'll be empty someday. Maybe I will house someone.
Maybe I will hold space. Maybe I will be space. Maybe. An
ancestor.



Calls to Action: A Disclaimer

Grief affects us each differently – some immobilized and others frantic, their sorrow transformed in public calls for justice and change. A call to action is not a call to guilt. There is no right way to move through grief, no set timeline for recovery, no one way to be in this moment of prolonged devastation.

Holding this awareness, we offer an opportunity for

movement, acknowledging it may or may not be possible. If Grief moves you to Action, you may find it here:

Protect Olympic Peninsula Forests

Mature, structurally complex forests, also known as legacy forests, are being clearcut across the Olympic Peninsula. Tell the Board of Natural Resources we need a policy that protects all legacy forests in western Washington, and we need it now before they are gone.

--> bnr@dnr.wa.gov Volunteer with the Center for Responsible Forestry to help stop logging on WA state land.

Join people taking action. Take refuge in community.

Mason County Climate Justice Instagram: masoncountyclimatejustice

BIPOC-led grassroots non-profit fighting climate change

Olympic Climate Action olyclimate.org

North Olympic Peninsula residents working to stem climate disruption

Elwha Legacy Forest Coalition elwhalegacyforests.org

Grassroots coalition working to protect Legacy Forest in Elwha watershed



Center for Responsible Forestry c4rf.org

Working to preserve mature, structurally complex, legacy forests.

PNW Forest Climate Alliance www.forestclimatealliance.org

Forest Defense working groups organizing across PNW

Sierra Club www.sierraclub.org/washington/north-olympic

Local chapter of Sierra Club, works to protect living forests

Deep Roots Camp deeprootscamp.org

Training camp for forest defenders, by 350.org, CLDC, & Rising Tide NA

Center for Sustainable Economy www.sustainable-economy.org

Environmental Economics think-tank-do-tank, re: private & public-owned forest (PT)

Forest Carbon Coalition www.forestcarboncoalition.org

Policy/advocacy workers linking forest to climate (PT)

Wild Olympics wildolympics.org

Campaign to protect Forest w/ Wilderness & Wild & Scenic river designations

Lost and Lingering || Forest We Grieve || Forest We Witness || 2023

Elwha, "Aldwell Sorts", lost to DNR Timber Sale 2023

Penny Creek, "Pennywise", lost to DNR Timber Sale 2022-23

Sherwood Forest, "Sure Wood", lost to DNR Timber Sale 2023

Elwha, "TCB 23" and "Power Plant", scheduled DNR Auction June 2023

Discovery Bay, "Upper Salmon", scheduled DNR Auction June 2023

Sadie Creek, "On The Line", scheduled DNR Auction June 2023

Lake Sutherland, "Salt and Pepper", scheduled DNR Auction Dec 2023

Jefferson County, "Last Crocker", scheduled DNR Auction Dec 2023

Miller State Park, threatened with development

Chehalis River, "Mm Mm Good", scheduled DNR Auction Dec 2023





PHOTOS: DR. ANNA MARIA WOLF



“Upper Salmon Creek” DNR Timber Sale
South of Discovery Bay, Clallam County
Auction scheduled July 26, 2023





“Bear” by Thea Barnett

CLOSING WORDS

“Here’s a word. *Bereavement*. Or, *Bereaved*. *Bereft*. It’s from the Old English *bereafian*, meaning ‘to deprive of, to take away, seize, rob’. Robbed, Seized. It happens to everyone, but you feel it alone. Shocking loss isn’t to be shared, no matter how hard you try.

‘Imagine’ I said, back then, to some friends, in an earnest attempt to explain, ‘imagine your whole family is in a room. Yes, all of them. All the people you love. So then what happens is someone comes into the room and punches you all in the stomach. Each one of you. Really hard. So you’re all on the floor. Right? So the thing is, you all share the same kind of pain, exactly the same, but you’re too busy experiencing total agony to feel anything other than completely alone. *That’s what it’s like.*’

— Helen Macdonald, *H is for Hawk*

grieving is never easy, either together or alone.

to craft this zine, to grieve this forest, we came together. in forest walks, grief circles, zoom meetings, in art making and sharing, we gathered. connections were made and friendships forged. seeds planted. green growth sprouted, not yet identifiable by species or purpose.

perhaps unsurprisingly, this process has also been painful and frustrating, especially for those at the center of it.

we gathered for brief moments of light, and togetherness. but we live amidst a storm, which repeatedly fractures, injures, and scatters communities.

looking around, i see the members of our tiny, nascent collective struggling with housing, health care, hunger, hate, cancer, employment, exhaustion, anxiety, burnout, and addiction.

in each of our struggles, grief is embedded, ever-present, the unwelcome guest.

in closing, i wish you well, fellow travelers. i am grateful to all those, named and unnamed, who contributed in ways seen and unseen to this endeavor.

thank you.

i pray we act more as salve and less as salt in each others’ wounds.
blessings on you, on the forest, and on all our relations.

dan

FOREST FOR THE TREES

Issue #2

will there be an issue #2? is this the beginning or the end?

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Forest For the Trees is accepting writing and visual art exploring **Grief, Forest, and Action grounded on the Olympic Peninsula.**

We welcome pieces that draw connections between our Peninsula and larger struggles and sorrows: stories, essays, poems, prints, drawings. Choose your own adventure. *

Future issues will be printed in Black/White.

Send your creative work, words of encouragement, and offers to help out to:
forestdreamers@proton.me

DONATIONS

Many thanks if you can kick in \$5-50 to print.
venmo: @danfodor memo: Forest Zine.

* This zine is a first attempt, a work-in-progress, not yet holding the many Peoples and perspectives surrounding Grief and Forest on the Olympic Peninsula.

We welcome many voices and perspectives, and especially aim to uplift & amplify those often overlooked or excluded: Indigenous, Black, people of color, LGBTQAI+, multigenerational knowledge, migrants, unhoused, and loggers (who grieve, too).

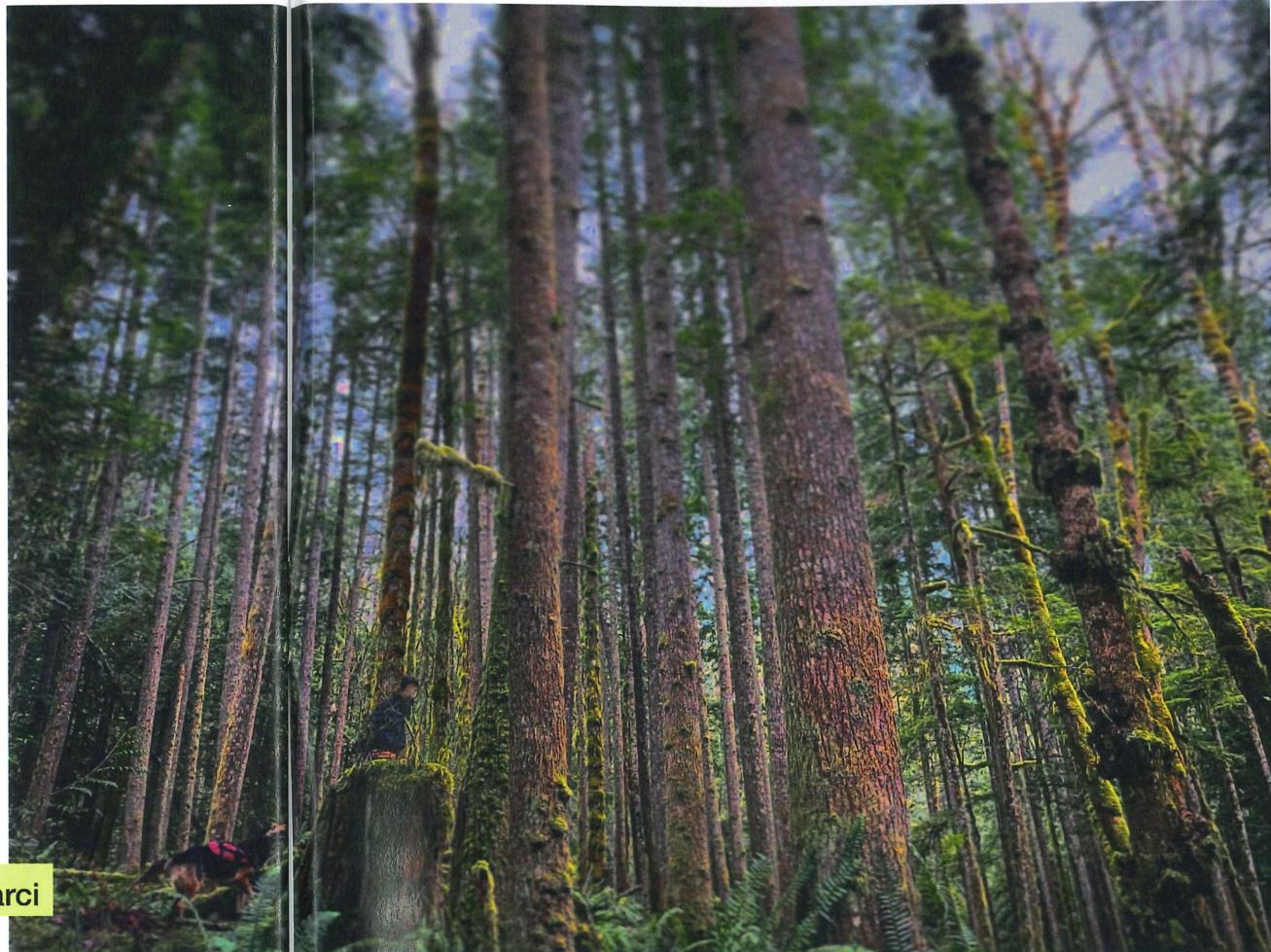


Photo: Marci

"ALL LIVING THINGS ARE PEOPLE OF ONE FORM OR ANOTHER."
Howard Hansen (Quileute)

If we allowed ourselves to feel All Living things as People, how would we grieve?

What stories would we tell? What songs would we sing?

How would we honor the Village that was Forest and all the People who lived within?

"The abolitionist mission isn't done until every prison is empty," Teran told me. "When there are no more cops, when the land has been given back, that's when it's over."

"However, in the worship of Gross National Product, outsiders bought right from someone, not us, to kill Forest and Forest died, River died, and what of Sa-ats? And myriad Forest-hidden small lakes and ponds even Po-oke never saw? Forest was huge and kept secret many of its intimacies for other than Po-oke life...where have they gone, the secret, enticing feeding and resting places for those incredibly far-ranging Geese and Ducks and their cousins of the Sky? Being Natural spots they stood in the way of G.N.P. Progress and now they are mud. Or baked earth."

~Howard Hansen Reprinted with permission,
from "Twilight on the Thunderbird: A Memoir of Quileute Indian Life", 2013

Po-oke – Quileute People
Sa-ats – Spring/Chinook Salmon

