This document provides information from several scientific studies that have shown that environmental protections for forests are not the cause of loss of jobs. In fact, these studies have shown that low impact forestry provides more long term jobs and more long term lumber production than does high impact forestry. Clear cut forestry (and pseudo clear cutting), mechanized harvesting, and technological changes have eliminated thousands of jobs in order to improve short term profit margins and short term shareholder dividends for forestry companies.

The timber industry frequently attempts to paint a "jobs vs. environment" picture, charging that environmental protection has caused sawmill closures and job losses. The facts, however, paint a very different picture. A 1997 study by Freudenberg et al., published in the academic journal Sociological Perspectives (Vol. 41, #1) found that the vast majority of timber job losses and mill closures occurred before logging restrictions to protect the northern spotted owl and other forest species began in the early 1990's. Between 1979 and 1989—a period of extremely high logging levels on Northwest federal forests--timber employment in Oregon and Washington fell by about 20,000 workers. The study found that the culprit was not environmental protections, but automation and the loss of old-growth forests due to logging itself.

Furthermore, a December 1995 study by dozens of the Northwest's most prominent economists, entitled "Economic Well-Being and Environmental Protection in the Pacific Northwest", found that, between 1988 and 1994, the number of jobs in the Pacific Northwest increased by 940,000, and earnings rose by 24%. The report found that many of the new jobs were being attracted by the prospects of increased environmental protection and quality in the region. The study found that even the most "timber-dependent" counties were reporting a net increase in jobs (see New York Times, October 11, 1994).

Two different studies by the University of New Brunswick and by the New Brunswick Federation of Wood Lot Owners show the economic and employment benefits of low impact logging relative to clear cutting or pseudo clear cutting. They further found that, primarily due to increased mechanization, over a 25 year period in New Brunswick the number of people employed in timber harvesting had been more than cut in half while the timber harvest doubled.

The New Brunswick Federation of Woodlot Owners found that clearcutting represented a lost potential in employment and income. By taking the low impact approach to forestry, employment was roughly doubled over 45 years and revenue to the landowner more than
The University of New Brunswick study found that over a 43 year period a site logged selectively yielded 42 percent more wood than a clearcut area, and the value of the standing timber in the selection cut was then greater than that standing on the clear cut site, although it was harvested three times and the clear cut only once.

The salmon fishing industry in the northern third of California has been destroyed by the demise of the salmon population, now listed as endangered. This has put many thousands of people out of work and has been a major blow to California’s economy. In a 1998 review, the federal Environmental Protection Agency commented that “silviculture is the leading source of impairment to water quality in the North Coast of California. Related to these water quality problems, California has a number of species, in particular salmon, that are endangered, threatened or otherwise seriously at risk, due in very significant part to forestry activities that impair their spawning, breeding and rearing habitat.”

Furthermore, recreation, hunting and fishing in forests contribute vastly more income to the economy, and generate far more jobs, than logging. For example, in national forests the Forest Service has predicted that recreation, hunting, and fishing in national forests would contribute 31.4 times more income to the nation's economy, and create 38.1 times more jobs, than logging on national forests. (The Forest Service Program for Forest and Rangeland Resources: A Long-Term Strategic Plan, Draft 1995 RPA Program, Oct. 1995, pp. IV-2 & IV-3)

Low impact, sustainable logging benefits our economy, provides more long term jobs, protects our watersheds and water supplies, preserves our natural heritage, improves the well being of endangered species and other fish and wildlife, and preserves the beauty of California, while high impact logging does just the opposite.