

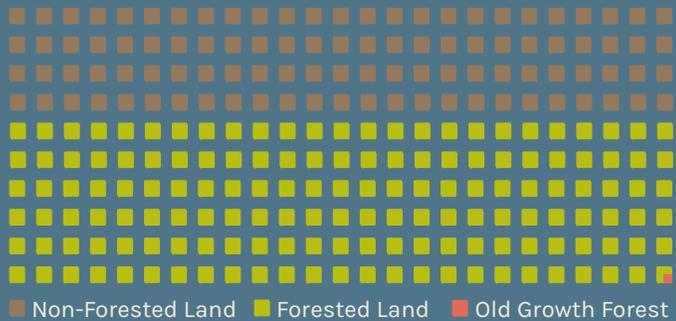
# An Act Relative to the Protection of Old Growth Forests

HD264 Sponsored by Representative Natalie Blais (Sunderland)

## The Facts

Old growth forests are **extremely rare** groves of ancient trees. Of 5 million acres of land in Massachusetts, only **1,500 acres** are old growth forest.

Land in Massachusetts: 1 box = 20,000 acres



### Where?



Old growth is scattered throughout the state in **small patches** - mainly on steep mountainsides in Western Massachusetts.



They serve as **living laboratories** to learn about forest development, tree genetics, and climate change.



Canopy layers and fallen trees create **rich and diverse habitats** for many species of birds, insects, and reptiles.



Old growth forests act as **carbon sinks** to sequester greenhouse gases.



## The Problem

Old growth forests in Massachusetts are not currently **lawfully protected** from timber cutting.

## The Solution

Protection



Prohibit new development, recreational facilities, and commercial timber cutting in old growth forests.

Education



Create a **research and education** program to monitor the status and promote understanding of old growth forest reserves.

Growth



**Assess and select** forest areas which could one day meet the definition of an old growth forest to help ensure their long term protection.