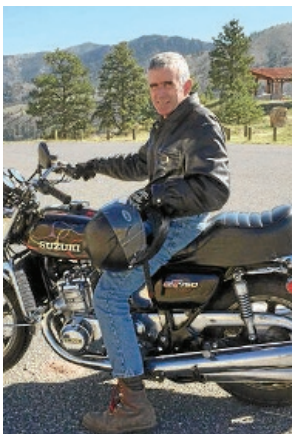


AREA DEATH

Scott MacDonald

June 23, 1956–Nov. 8, 2022



CLANCY—Scott MacDonald, beloved husband, brother, uncle and cousin, passed away in the loving arms of his family on November 8, 2022, following a prolonged illness. Scott was a kind, thoughtful and remarkable man. While he was often reflective, he was also always thoughtful and tender, and he was especially dedicated to his wife and extended family. He handled his chronic illness with grace, courage and determination, and managed to maintain a positive outlook throughout his life.

Scott was born on June 23, 1956, in Helena, MT. He was the oldest of the three children in the Nancy E. (Cunningham) MacDonald and Roderick F. MacDonald family, and he was the world's best big brother to Mindy and Jon.

Scott married his precious wife and best friend Sasithorn (Pom) Karansakun on March 29, 1992, in Udonthani, Thailand. Pom's brother-in-law, Phophon, met Scott through a shared interest in motorcycles, and subsequently introduced Pom and Scott recognizing that they would be a perfect match. Scott was generously welcomed into Pom's family with the exhortation that her parents would willingly bless the union if Scott promised to continue to respect and cherish their daughter, and he invariably did. Scott and Pom permanently maintained a home-away-from-home in Udonthani so that they could visit family and travel their favorite roads across Thailand by motorcycle.

Scott's extensive world travels began just before he turned 11, when he moved with his family to Monrovia, Liberia. The African adventures continued when the family moved to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania four years later, and moved again to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia two years after that. Scott graduated from the American Community School in Addis Ababa in 1975.

Following high school, Scott moved with members of his small graduating class back across the world to Durango, CO, where he followed his interest in/obsession with mechanical work while attending the San Juan Basin Area Vocational Technical School. In that program he completed in-depth training in Diesel and Heavy-Duty Equipment management and repair. During those years in Colorado, Scott also worked as a motorcycle (Granny's Cycle Shop) and sports car mechanic with his lifelong friend Dan Trollan, the owner of Dan's Sports Car.

In 1980, Scott started his professional life with the international oil exploration company, Western Geophysical, working in Khon Kaen, Thailand. He worked for this company for 35 years through many mergers, acquisitions and purchases until WesternGeco was acquired by the French oil field service company, Schlumberger. His remarkable career in the oil industry allowed Scott to continue traveling the globe, and he saw more of the world than most of us can imagine. He lived and worked in Kuwait, Chad, Djibouti, Tanzania, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Yemen, France, Australia, England, Germany, Russia, Libya, Malta, Thailand, Jordan, and Houston, TX, to name just a few of his exotic work sites.

During his time with WesternGeco/Schlumberger Scott frequently worked as a drilling equipment expert in the field, but one of his favorite roles came later in his career when he became an instructor in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. In that position he enthusiastically taught other employees about mechanical repairs, his lifelong passion. Throughout his 35 years in the industry, what he treasured most were the many meaningful relationships that he developed with his co-workers. Living together in camps around the world, these friends were

like brothers, and cared for one another 24-7. Our family would like to thank all his friends around the globe and here in Montana for being such an important part of his life.

Despite their far-reaching world travels, in 2001, Scott and Pom realized that Scott's birthplace in Montana truly was "The Last Best Place," and they built a home in Clancy, MT, with a glorious view of the Elkhorn Mountains. Upon retirement in 2016, Scott returned to Clancy permanently where he avidly pursued his love of antique car restoration, hiking and motorcycle riding with Pom and photography.

Scott is survived by his devoted wife, Sasithorn (Pom) MacDonald; his younger sister, Melinda MacDonald; and a host of loving cousins and friends in the US, Thailand and around the world. He was preceded in death by his parents and his younger brother, Jonathan F. MacDonald.

Scott faced many medical challenges during his life including participating, in 1969, in one of the earliest successful NIH clinical trials for the treatment of Hodgkin's Lymphoma. We are eternally grateful to the many dedicated health care workers around the world who ensured that Scott was able to experience the precious gift of life for over 66 years. We would especially like to thank Dr. T. Wampler and Dr. T. Weiner of St. Peters in Helena, for their exceptional and unwavering care, as well as the skilled and compassionate surgeon Dr. R. Zuckerman of Kalispell. A very special blessing to Barbara Bayer of the Oriental Medicine Clinic in Helena for offering us hope and serenity. Thank you also to the amazing staff of Peace Hospice of Montana in Great Falls; your expert care and empathy provided a great source comfort for our entire family.

To Scott, the best husband, brother and friend that we could have ever asked for—Thank You for being our rock and inspiration. While you were taken from us far too soon, we were blessed beyond measure to have shared this wonderful life with you.

"In the end, only three things matter: how much you loved, how gently you lived, and how gracefully you let go of things not meant for you." -Buddhist Saying

Trees

From AI

The protest last week was one of many at Forest Service regional headquarters nationwide coordinated by the Climate Forests Campaign, according to Adam Rissien, the rewilding manager at WildEarth Guardians. He presented a letter to the Region 1 headquarters asking for a permanent rule protecting mature and old-growth trees. WildEarth Guardians is one of hundreds of environmental and conservation groups that are members of the Climate Forests Campaign, he said. Counting each group's members, plus about 5,100 petition signatures, he characterized the letter to the Forest Service as having 5 million supporters.

"The highest and best use" of mature and old-growth forests is to store carbon and provide habitat, Rissien said. Such forests are a "nature-based climate solution," he said, lamenting "resistance" from the U.S. Forest Service in comprehensively inventorying and publishing locations of mature and old-growth stands. Further, he said, "the Forest Service has refused to recognize logging as the primary threat to mature and old-growth forest."

Jeff Juel, the Montana policy director for Friends of the Clearwater, said he believed that "the managers of our national forests do not share those values" of mature and old-growth forests being inherently vital for carbon storage and habitat, not to mention tranquility and low-impact recreation. "The Forest Service sees these same forests as unhealthy," he said, and uses that perspective as a justification for management that he deemed "chainsaw medicine." Humans may be able to manage newer forests into old growth, he said, but the results would be centuries away — too late to make up for cutting down old trees now.

Public knowledge of mature and old-growth timber stands, he said, "is the last thing the Forest Service wants," and he reiterated Rissien's charge that the agency has been loath to follow mandates to inventory and publicize such stands.

A Region 1 spokesperson did not reply to a request for comment before deadline Friday.

Who defines old growth?

Part of the tension stems from varying conceptions of what constitutes mature and old-growth forests. The terms could be applied liberally to simply mean timber stands with large, old trees that are mostly free from human disturbance. Or the terms could be taken more narrowly to mean only stands with a certain amount of trees older than 150 years or more that exceed a certain trunk diameter. Environmental groups often use broader conceptions of mature and old-growth forest than the U.S. Forest Service. Definitions can also vary by location and species.

Tom Spies, a Forest Service Research and Development emeritus scientist and a professor at Oregon State University's College of Forestry, told Yale Climate Connections in 2019 that different groups can use that variability to serve their own agendas: "If you approach the issue with a particular agenda, you can take a really narrow definition that would exclude a lot of forest from being defined as old growth. Or you can have a very broad definition which would capture a lot of forest conditions."

But scientists agree that large, old trees store immense amounts of carbon within them, preventing it from being released into the atmosphere and further contributing to climate change. By failing to provide comprehensive protections for mature and old-growth trees, the protesters argued Monday, the Forest Service is shirking responsibility to protect the environment.

"We cannot have carbon deniers managing our forests," Juel said, suggesting that the Forest Service might need to be dismantled.

Rissien cited the controversial Black Ram Project — a mix of commercial logging, thinning and prescribed burning in northwestern Montana's Kootenai National Forest — as one example of destruction of old trees.

According to the Forest Service's decision to approve the project, "of the 91,647 acres of National Forest System land within the Black Ram project area, 13,705 acres are old growth. There are 579 acres proposed for intermediate harvest that meet the definition of old growth and are supported

by scientific basis and rationale as to why vegetation management would be the most effective strategy in increasing resilience. There is no clear-cutting (or any type of regeneration harvest) of any old growth stand in this project."

The Forest Service, in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, stated that the project won't impact, or is unlikely to impact, species including bull trout, lynx and grizzly bears.

The groups assembled Monday disagreed.

"Along with all this logging comes road building," Rissien said, arguing that the project would be to the significant detriment of an already "imperiled population" of 20-30 grizzly bears in the Yaak Valley. WildEarth Guardians is among the groups suing the Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife Service over their determinations.

Micki Long, of Montana Audubon and Bitterroot Audubon Society, explained that a variety of birds, including species of concern in Montana, rely specifically on mature and old-growth forest for habitat they generally cannot find elsewhere. She cited the tiny flammulated owl, which stands about 6 inches tall and weighs only 60 grams. Timber stands with a high percentage of mature and old-growth trees offer habitat for mating pairs of the bird, she said, which reproduces infrequently. But stands without high percentage of such trees generally don't have mating pairs of the owl, inhibiting its reproduction and population.

Because the recruitment of newer trees into eventual old-growth forest could take centuries, she said, "let's leave the ones that we have."

Dressed as a tree, Mary Alexine, of the grassroots group Great Old Broads for Wilderness, spoke of a trip she and nine other "Great Old Broads" took to the area of the Black Ram Project. She described how the group traversed clear-cut forest and fire breaks in "sweltering heat," only to find reprieve in the cool, damp environs of mature forest.

"These large trees are the lungs of the planet," Alexine said. "These large mature trees are better left standing."

Michelle Dietrich of Friends of the Bitterroot cited another project, much closer to Missoula: the Bitterroot Front Proj-

ect. Covering much of the non-wilderness portions of the Bitterroot National Forest, the 144,000-acre forest-thinning proposal — which the Forest Service says will reduce wildfire risk to homes along the Bitterroot Range — represents a "monumental loss of carbon storage," she said.

Forest thinning research

Forest Service leaders and wildland firefighters often cite incidents in which forest fires are slowed down or reduced in severity upon running into areas where fuels have been thinned — particularly "ladder fuels" that allow ground fire to burn up into tree crowns. Clearing ground and ladder fuels, and constructing clear-cut fire breaks is a primary method of containing wildfire.

Dense forests in much of the West are not natural, thinning proponents argue, but rather are the product of a century of human influence via logging and full-suppression firefighting. Trying to stop and put out all wildfires, they say, has resulted in unnaturally overgrown forests that are far denser than historic stands that were kept thin by regular, often lower-intensity fire every decade or so. Proponents also cite studies showing that current, unmanaged forest conditions in many places differ vastly from historic forest conditions prior to the advent of full-suppression firefighting. By thinning forests, they can be returned to something approximately like historic conditions, in which "maintenance" or "disturbance" fire can pass through quickly and mostly on the ground, without growing into a ferocious crown fire.

Opponents of thinning say that clearing out smaller or less healthy trees and brush from forests makes forests more open to high winds that drive wildfires into raging infernos. By reducing the shade trees provide, they say, ground fuels will dry out more than in a denser, shadier forest.

Dietrich, with the face of The Lorax on her hat, argued that forest thinning doesn't protect homes from wildfire. About half the homes lost in the 2016 Roaring Lion fire had thinned around their property as advised, she said, but the thinning didn't save them.

Pantry

From AI

and gloves can be found at the pantry for people to use. It also acts as a mini-library with books and puzzles.

"We go through a lot of books and puzzles. People are always bringing puzzles out there and leaving them, but they go away, and new ones come," said McVey. "... I have been shocked at what goes in that pantry. Sometimes we'll put stuff out there where I'm like 'I don't know, maybe somebody needs it.' Then the next day that thing is gone. It's been everything from a 1970s vacuum cleaner to office supplies to bathroom décor, just a little bit of everything."

This pantry is stocked by United Way regularly,

but anyone can donate to it. It's a take-what-you-need and give-what-you-can sort of deal. The pantry is open for donations 24/7.

"Especially with winter being here now and people walking by, just (donate) things that are handy like something warm, something easy to eat, something quick to grab that's not going to freeze with it being so cold soon," said Melani McBride, community partnership coordinator at United Way who oversees the pantry. "Anything easily accessible for people, gloves, snow boots, hand warmers, emergency blankets, that would be amazing right now."

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Ratios

From AI

offered a different perspective.

About six years ago when Lacey was working as a superintendent at Great Falls Public Schools, the district needed to cut \$1.8 million from its budget. As a result, prevention specialists, student support advocates, intervention teachers, and multiple programs for arts, medical careers and environmental education all received the ax.

"It was not fun, and it was hard work figuring out what to cut," Lacey said.

She continued that if Arntzen's recommendations were to make it through, superintendents would have been added to that list of possible cuts. Additionally, librarians, counselors and principals would be vulnerable without staffing ratios.

"And that's how it's going to happen because we don't have enough resources and you cut and remove what you don't have to have," she continued.

Despite support from many board members, not all are convinced mandated staffing ratios are the right approach for the board when it comes to their responsibility to set minimum standards for Montana's schools.

Board member Jane Lee Hamman said that these discussions have been some of the most frustrating in her tenure on the board and maintained her position in favor of more flexibility for schools while also providing guidelines.

"I'm very frustrated that I think the small rural schools are being beaten down by so many rules and certain requirements that we need to have a higher level look at what we're doing," said Hamman.

The board did not have enough time to respond to all the submitted comments and still have about 19 sections to go through, including accreditation rules related to professional development, graduation requirements and distance learning. The remaining comments will be addressed at a meeting in January.

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