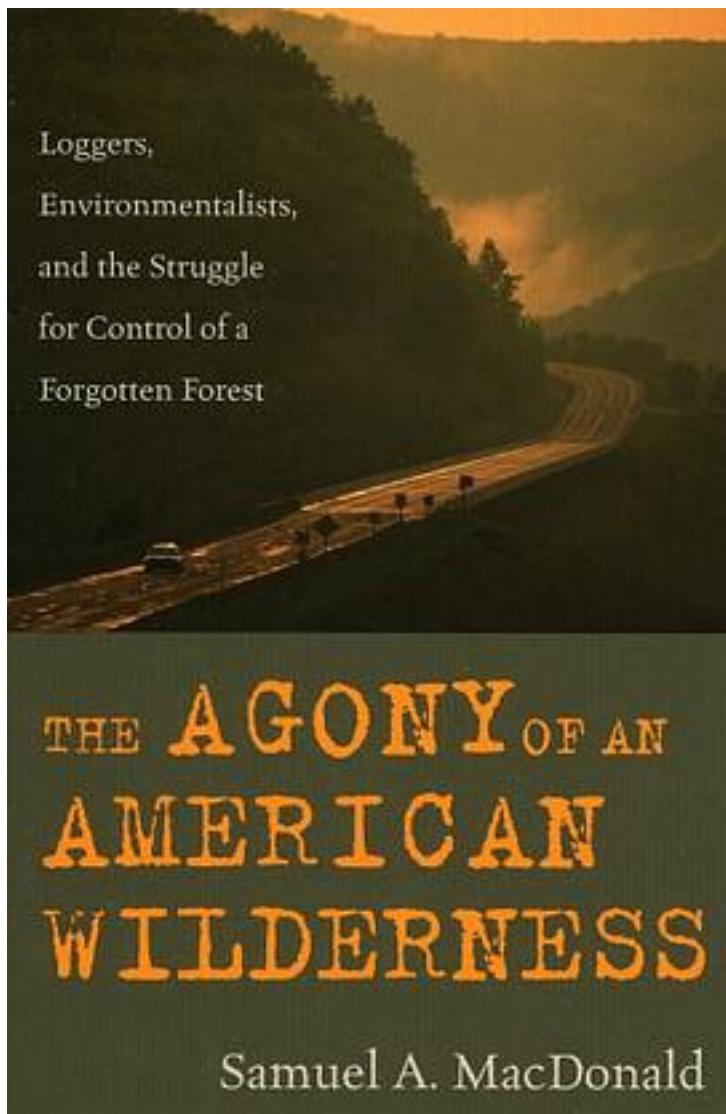


The Agony of an American Wilderness



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The Allegheny National Forest exists on what might have been the most heavily exploited landscape in the history of civilization. Careful stewardship over the last eight decades has transformed it into a beautiful forest that contains countless wildlife species and some of the world's most valuable timber. Local communities are steeped in pride for having written that unprecedented environmental success story. Unfortunately, the Allegheny is now the focus of a caustic new timber war that will ultimately test the limits of American environmentalism. No longer satisfied with protecting the pristine old growth that captured the national imagination in the early 1990s, activists have embarked on campaign to put an end to the Allegheny timber program. Litigation and protests have shaken the region for a decade. More recently, it has become a hotbed of eco-terrorism. But restoring the Allegheny to something activists accept will be far more difficult, expensive, and explosive than setting aside a few million acres for the northern spotted owl. This book examines the communities caught in the middle of that political crossfire and forces Americans to decide if they are ready to accept the new activist agenda: In their own words, 'If we can stop logging on the Allegheny, we can stop it everywhere.'

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