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If valuation processes are dualistic in the sense that ethical values are given priority over instrumental values, and if old-growth forests are considered to be valuable in their own right, then the cost-benefits approach to valuing old growth is inappropriate. If this is the case, then ethical standards must be used to determine whether preservation is the correct policy when human material needs and ecosystem preservation are in conflict. Such a standard is suggested and evaluated in the context of the policy debate over the preservation of spotted owl habitat in the Pacific Northwest region of the U.S. (Source: The White Horse Press)

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