

Cover Letter for a Bristlecone Pine

15 March 2021, CE

Holocene Department
Quaternary Division
Geologic Timescale

Re: Geomorphic Destructor

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is *Pinus longaeva*, and I am applying for the position of Geomorphic Destructor. I am the grumpiest, stubbornest, most bullheaded son of a bitch you will ever meet. I first began my career in defiance more than one thousand years ago. However, this career path was not a choice; it was survival. I was seeded on a steep and rocky hillslope and given no more than a sliver in bedrock on which to stake my claim. Since those early days, I have worked hard to locally alter my environment to suit my needs, and I am proud to say that my efforts have been geomorphically substantial.

My ultimate career goal is to destroy the hillslope on which I reside. Although I do not recommend a life fueled by hatred, I cannot deny that I am deeply resentful of the patchy, nutrient-poor soils on which I have been reared. For this reason, I am engaged in the very serious work of bringing this hillside to its knees through processes of chemical and mechanical weathering. While many cousins in the family *Pinus* have lived fast and died young, I have toiled in agony, improving my diameter perhaps two centimeters every century, and tolerating the rather insulting classification of “seedling” for as much as half a century. I do not point this out to complain, merely to demonstrate that my circumstances have imbued me with extreme fortitude. This is the trait that I will draw on most throughout my career.

While I understand that my career goal is ambitious, I believe that I am uniquely capable of achieving it. I have been resilient in the face of plagues that might have felled lesser trees; I can laugh with scorn at the windblown sands that abrade my trunk, and I even enjoy the occasional warmth of a wildfire. While other candidates may boast significantly faster growth rates and deeper root systems, I can guarantee you that I will outlast every other tree on the job. These qualities set me apart from other candidates for the position of Geomorphic Destructor.

In addition to my qualifications as a geomorphic agent, I bring a unique, justice-oriented perspective to any workplace, as I am very passionate about challenging stereotypes in all that I do. If given this opportunity, I will work to challenge the notion that all trees should be benevolent shade-givers. This is a harmful view that perpetuates the exploitation of trees for the benefit of mankind, and I cannot rest until this misconception has been laid to rest.

Sincerely,

Pinus longaeva