

Submitted to <https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?Project=65356> via docket # 65356

Dear U.S. Forest Service,

Please accept these 12,227 public comments from members and activists of the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) in reference to Docket # 65356.

Please end the cutting of old-growth trees and let mature trees grow in all national forests.

Under your current proposal, our climate-critical old-growth and mature trees could still be sent to the mill. When these trees are cut down and processed, much of their stored carbon is rapidly released.

It can take decades or even centuries to return to the scale of carbon capture provided by our oldest forests. The climate crisis is upon us now as we experience record-shattering heat and widespread climate disasters – we don't have time to regrow these forests.

That's why I'm asking you to ensure that your final policy:

- Stops old-growth trees from being cut down and sent to the mill
- Sets the stage for durable protections for mature trees so they can become our next generation of old-growth trees

To build upon our momentum and fulfill the promise of the Biden administration's executive order two years ago recognizing the importance of our oldest forests in the fight against climate change, I'm counting on you to stop the cutting of old-growth trees and let mature trees stand in all national forests. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Margaret Tran  
Digital Campaign Manager, Digital Advocacy & Fundraising, NRDC