

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/29/2022 4:00:00 AM

First name: Linda

Last name: Healow

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I'm writing in response to President Biden's Executive Order "Strengthening the Nation's Forests, Communities, and Local Economies". Protecting our remaining matured and old growth forests and trees from logging and development on federal public lands represents one of the simplest and most cost-effective climate policies the US can deploy. Literally nothing needs to be done on the ground and no money spent (except of mapping efforts to accurately identify these areas), we simply need to restrain the US Forest Service, logging companies and politicians from logging these areas, treating them as crops to be used for profit. However, if one is serious about climate change and the values of forests as carbon sinks, as one who believes in science, it is not enough to simply 'protect' the few remaining old growth forests and mature trees. Roadless landscapes with intact ecosystems need to be included in a moratorium on logging with monies spent to transition to a world without logging in any roadless ecosystem or any functioning ecosystem that can be rehabilitated following roads being made.

I live in Montana. Rather than trying to save functioning ecosystems, watersheds, and habitat, the US Forest Service has developed plans that bow to profit from industrial recreation. This damages landscapes.

Montana, like many western states, has skyrocketing development in rural/urban interface (RUI). The US Forest Service, along with logging companies, has sold the public on the short term solution of cutting old growth, underbrush, smaller trees in the name of fire prevention. This activity is unsupported by research. The best one can do if they live in a RUI area is implementing landscaping techniques described as defensible space.

Today's forest fires are enhanced by hot temperatures, wind and drought. These are all ultimately caused by and will increase due to climate change.

A burned forest can still serve as a carbon sink and recover. 'Salvage' logging burned forests adds roads and removes timber that ultimately contributes to the ecosystem's recovery.

It's time for some very difficult choices, not popular in a world bent on profit. Lands, forests need to be set aside to serve as carbon sinks. Intact ecosystems that serve as carbon sinks provide habitat and migration corridors for wildlife. Development on the borders of carbon sinks needs to be curbed.

I urge you all to consider offering further protection for the greater Yellowstone ecosystem and Northern Rockies ecosystems. A good place to start would be to adopt NREPA, the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act.

Relegate logging to current privately owned plantations. Save public lands globally for carbon sinks. Humans need to transition away from wood used as fuel.

Thank you for allowing comment. I hope take this information to heart, and this isn't just a 'feel good' measure on the part of the current administration.

ATTACHMENT: The Significance of Carbon Emissions from Logging on Federal Forests