

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 8/30/2022 4:00:00 AM

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Organization: Alaska Wilderness League

Title: Legislative Associate

Comments: Dear Director Stone-Manning and Deputy Chief French, Alaska Wilderness League applauds your agencies for holding the recent comment period on Executive Order 14072, requesting more information on federal old growth and mature forests. We asked our members to submit comments to make sure this administration enacts durable protections across our federal public lands that will endure in future administrations to protect our mature and old-growth trees, especially in the Tongass National Forest, before they are gone for good. We have enclosed the following 5,773 signatures from supporters who are equally concerned about protecting old growth and mature forests across the US. They have each signed a petition stating: [Idquo]Thank you for taking the next steps to advance President Biden's Executive Order on Strengthening the Nation's Forests, Communities, and Local Economies. Protecting our remaining mature and old-growth forests and trees on federal lands represents one of the simplest and most cost-effective climate policies the U.S. can deploy at scale. With the climate and biodiversity crises growing exponentially worse and logging prevalent throughout these forests, it is critical that you provide lasting protections for these trees as soon as possible. Logging more of our mature & old-growth trees and forests not only makes the climate crisis worse AND adds a major source of carbon dioxide emissions to the atmosphere. As our largest national forest with real logging threats, lasting protection for the Tongass National Forest will be crucial. Tongass trees store vast amounts of carbon and protect streams critical to the health of Alaska's salmon populations. Large intact ecosystems like the Tongass are also essential in the fight to preserve biodiversity on our planet, protecting black and brown bears, wolves, flying squirrels, bald eagles and more. Make sure President Biden enacts durable protections across our federal public lands that will endure in future administrations to protect our mature and old-growth trees before they are gone for good. [rdquo] We are also including the 3,000 additional comments, which some of our supporters included with their signature. Thank you for your consideration and attention to this important issue. Sincerely, Maddie Halloran Manager of Alaska Campaigns Alaska Wilderness League ATTACHMENT: Old Growth Public Comments 8.30.22.pdf (3,000 additional comments, which some of our supporters included with their signature.)