Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/1/2024 5:00:00 AM
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Comments: Old Growth (OG) and mature forests are obviously important to many wildlife species and have been heavily impacted by humans and climate change. In NM the spruce-fir and ponderosa forests have been especially hard hit. Logging and climate have now combined. We are having significant drought, fires, wind events and bark beetle outbreaks. While logging of OG can be curtailed administratively (the obvious logical thing to do) we are still left with the climate impacts. Inteligent management seems to have been lacking, especially on the Carson NF in northern NM. While an adjacent Forest (Rio Grande NF in CO) had lost all of their mature and OG Engelman spruce to bark beetle kill (500,000 ac.) the Carson claimed their spruce was fine, no problem, and they intended to continue logging it. This in spite of 60 year old clear cuts that still are not spruce-fir forest. It is likely we will lose some of our spruce OG dependent wildlife in the not so distant future. It is long past time to stop logging spruce in NM. Ponderosa pine (PIPO) is a bit different. It was the preferred logging species and was heavily cut over for many years. PIPO needs regular low intensity fire which was eliminated by heavy grazing and fire control resulting in dense stands with ladder fuels. In recent decades we have lost a lot of PIPO to stand replacing fires which probably almost never occurred under natural conditions. We need OG PIPO and that will require getting low intensity fire back into PIPO. Attached is a list of some NM wildlife that use OG and mature forests. The list is not complete but it should be clear that older forests are important for wildlife. To make matters worse, the Forest Service in Region 3 completely ignores State listed species that are in trouble and headed for extirpation (especially the Carson NF).

ATTACHMENT: JH Old Growth Management Comments.docx List of some New Mexico forest wildlife species that use old growth.