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Comments: Thank you for taking the next steps to advance President Biden's Executive Order on Strengthening the Nation's Forests, Communities, and Local Economies.

Climate change is real and we must act immediately to ameliorate its effects. As you know, protecting our remaining mature and old-growth forests and trees on federal lands is one of the simplest and most cost-effective climate policies the U.S. can use. Please fulfill the President's directive to provide lasting protections for these trees.

For the purpose of protecting these climate-critical forests from logging, 'mature' should be defined as no older than 80 years. By establishing the age of mature forests and trees at 80 years, federal agencies will establish a safety net that assures minimum protection of the ecological and carbon benefits they provide for future generations.

President Biden's Earth Day Executive Order rightly recognized the critical role mature and old-growth forests play as a climate solution, and the urgent need to confront the threats forests face.

It is critical for federal agencies to initiate a rule-making process as soon as possible.

In summary, I urge the US Department of Agriculture and US Department of Interior to work together to soon initiate a rulemaking based on a definition of mature forests and trees as no older than 80, to permanently end the avoidable loss of their critically important carbon, water and wildlife values to logging.