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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." Protecting our remaining mature 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 U.S. can deploy. Literally nothing needs to be done except on the effort to map them; we simply need to restrain ourselves from logging, i.e., any cutting and removing of mature and old forests/trees, from these areas.

Almost every logging project currently planned across the country targets some mature and old-growth trees/stands for removal, including projects in the name of "restoration," "hazardous fuels reduction," and "wildfire mitigation," underscore this point. Not only is the threat of logging to mature and old-growth federal forests pressing, it's one that federal land management agencies actually have control over.

Mature healthy trees in forested areas are NOT a risk and in fact help protect us from drought by infiltrating water into the soil, building water resiliency, cooling and shading the soil, building soil resilience. We imperil our existence by cutting these "mother" trees down. We may NEVER get growth like this again, as water tables drop, as soils dry up and blow away, as temperatures increase and rain becomes more unreliable.

It is imperative that we protect all healthy trees and forests and leave them intact so that their beneficial influence can spread.