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Comments: It is important that ALL old-growth and mature forests, in dryland ecosystems as well as the better-known alpine and Pacific Northwest environments, are conserved for the benefit of wildlife, air and water quality, climate adaptation, and so much more. Piñon pine and juniper forests play a particularly critical role in the preservation of wildlife habitat, vegetative cover, watershed protection, and carbon capture in BLM-managed lands. These forests are subject to temperature extremes and limited moisture availability, and yet are among the least studied and most ignored North American forest types.

I urge the Biden administration to conduct a comprehensive inventory of mature and old-growth piñon pine and juniper forests on the Colorado Plateau during this first stage of implementing the president's executive order.

Thank you for your consideration.