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Organization:

Title:

Comments: I believe that it is important that we preserve all old-growth forests. We have already sacrificed too many of these majestic forests that are so essential for our wildlife, air and water quality, and to address climate change.

It is important to preserve all old-growth forests in dry land ecosystems as well as the better-known alpine and Pacific Northwest environments. Please include 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. Including the old-growth piñon pine and juniper forests is important for the following reasons:

- these forests are subject to temperature extremes and limited moisture availability. These forests are often the sole woodland provider of wildlife habitat, vegetative cover, watershed protection, and traditional food and medicine gathering in dry land and BLM-managed lands across the West;
- single-leaf piñon pine trees can reach ages of up to 600 years and juniper can reach ages of up to 1600 years. These historic forests and associated undisturbed biological soil crusts store a disproportionate amount of carbon in dry land ecosystems, and are more resistant to disruptions caused by climate change;
- old-growth piñon-juniper forests are home to more than 70 bird species and are often the only suitable habitat for many of these species, whose populations are currently declining rapidly under intense pressure from climate change, development, and drought;
- although they cover hundreds of millions of acres and provide irreplaceable habitat and ecosystem benefits, piñon-juniper forests are among the least studied and most ignored North American forest types. Piñon pine and juniper forests are the largest forest type by acreage managed by BLM and therefore should be included in its inventory.

Thank you for considering my opinion.