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Comments: Dear Policy makers.

When you "define" old growth forests in order to protect them, Please do not overlook the Pinyon Pine and Juniper forests of the high desert states. Although less dramatically beautiful, these trees are hundreds of years old and vitally important to the ecosystem of the vast surrounding areas and they contribute greatly to the mitigation of climate change. They store vast amounts of carbon, even more important because of the lack of other types of trees in the areas where these trees thrive. They provide habitat for countless birds and other animals who are losing precious habitat daily, as well as shade for humans and mitigation of the intense heat in the desert. They must be preserved and not destroyed for the benefit of cattle grazing or other reasons. More than unfair, that practice is now contributing to the destruction of our planet for future generations. The time is NOW to protect Juniper and Pinyon Pine and give them the designation of OLD GROWTH FORESTS that they have so earned.