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First name: Susan

Last name: Mates

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Comments in response to Request for Information (RFI) on Federal Old Growth and Mature Forests (Executive Order 14072) #NP-3239

To: Forest Service, Agriculture (USDA); Bureau of Land Management, Interior (DOI)

We must permanently protect mature and old growth forests and trees across all federal lands. I have witnessed the destruction of most of the old forests in the Willamette National Forest, making protections for those remaining trees all the more important. These older trees store vast amounts of carbon, and have evolved to better withstand wildfires. Ending the logging of mature and old-growth forests and trees on federal public lands can assist in curbing climate change, markedly reduce carbon emissions, and promote healthy watersheds. This is our best, lowest cost solution to these problems.

The bipartisan \$1.2 trillion infrastructure law significantly increased funding for forest thinning, including commercial logging on 30 million acres of federal lands. The justifications for this logging are weak and fly in the face of current scientific research. We urgently need a rulemaking to protect these mature and old-growth trees.

I urge you to define mature trees as those older than 80 years, and old-growth forests as those with trees over 21 inches DBH. These trees must be specifically protected from logging. Clear guidelines are needed for "thinning", "selective thinning" and "patch harvesting" which are far better approaches to timber harvesting than "clear cutting" and "fuels reduction" which has been shown to be ineffective when drought and high winds can spread embers for great distances and provide these trees with permanent protections.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue.