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Comments: National Forests, which process carbon dioxide, produce oxygen, filter air pollution, and house many endangered species, could be opened up to oil drilling. Because of the many services forests provide us, destroying forests in order to produce fossil fuels would have far-reaching effects not only on ecosystems but also on people.

The new rule proposed by the Department of the Interior would remove public input, stop the Forest Service from doing environmental review, and remove the requirement for the Forest Service to consent to oil leases. These changes would make it quick and easy for the fossil fuel industry to move in and take over our forests, both destroying nature and increasing the effects of climate change.

Forests are an extremely important part of our nation because of their effects on climate and public health. Trees take in carbon dioxide, which is a greenhouse gas, and in turn release oxygen, which we need to breathe. In this way, trees can help to mitigate the effects of climate change by taking up some of the carbon dioxide produced by burning fossil fuels. Trees also clean the air as they take in carbon dioxide and filter out toxic particles. Besides these benefits for humans, forests host a wide variety of plants and animals, which are already suffering from intense deforestation.

Signed,

Jan Hughes

No Titles